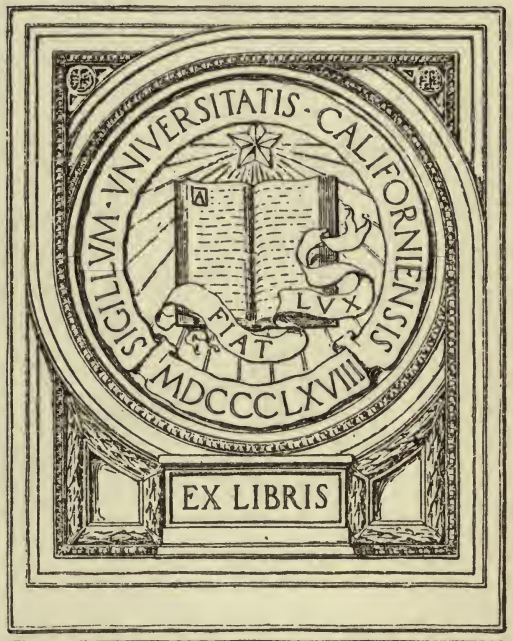
What Is Judaism?

Abram S. Isaacs

IN MEMORIAM
Rabbi Isadore Isaacson



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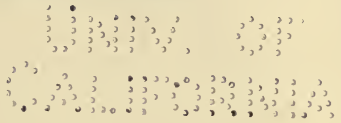
What is Judaism?

A Survey of Jewish Life, Thought and Achievement



By

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ABRAM S. ISAACS

IN MEMORIAM

Rabbi Isadore Isaacson

The Knickerbocker Press, New York

INTRODUCTION

SO much interest continues to be felt in the story of Judaism, in literature, art, and the drama—a story that has not reached its final chapter—that it was thought helpful and timely to issue the present volume. Gathering in more permanent form a number of essays contributed within recent years to various periodicals, it presents along different lines the message and meaning of the Jew's religion and history, and in the general atmosphere of misunderstanding seeks to vindicate his character and services.

The Jew suffers, undoubtedly, from being regarded almost wholly as an antique. His work and mission are relegated exclusively to Bible times; his presence and claims today are considered curiously, if not offensively, out of place. Why, he is an extinct phenomenon—a Megatherium from Palestine, forsooth! And his religion? That is for the archæologist or the palæontologist

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alone. His record in the world, in the face of odds which would have crushed any other race or turned them adrift like the wandering gypsy, is still largely unknown. The real nature of his religion is as practically a mystery as in the days of Juvenal and Tacitus. His history and his literature are foreign territory and excluded from approved systems of instruction in school or college, as if these subjects bore an hereditary taint of their own.

Now, many factors contribute to this widespread ignorance and detraction, and chief among them, perhaps, is the failure to produce a clear and forceful exposition from the Jewish point of view, which, while preserving a fair and sober estimate, shall tell dispassionately and convincingly what is to be said, without heat or prejudice. Such a work, broad, thorough, discriminating, will rapidly win its right of way and aid appreciably in curing the distemper which would for ever treat the Jew with disdainful silence or contumely. A more refined method, of course, than mediæval torture, or the degradation of Ghetto and gaberdine; but strongly out of touch with the modern cur-

rent and the pretensions of a newer age. Is there such a fact as atavism in civilisation —a reaction toward savagery and the hep-hep cry? And must the Jew swing perpetually, a victim, between the upper and the nether millstone of destiny?

What is the secret of the Jew's everlasting crucifixion in some form or another? Of course, other creeds and races have aroused antipathy and suffered the cruelest persecution; but almost from the Jew's first appearance in history, he seems to have been made the mark of attack. A puny folk in numbers and strength, for two thousand years without soil, army, or political power, why has it created such antagonism? Is it really such an exceptional class? Were its pretensions too lofty, its claims too excessive, its dreams too ideal? Has it protested too much and robed itself too proudly in the cloak of superior virtue and heaven's livery? Were Apion and other ancient authors of distinction justified in their characterisation of the Jewish religion as superstition and disease, a plague-spot to be exterminated remorselessly as the highest duty to man? And is the proposed solution of the Jewish

question in Russia the proper one—one third of the Jews to be exiled. one third to be converted, one third to be slain? Curious fate of a people—to survive the calumny of centuries, only to be subjected again to the olden slanders, a continuous process of vilification, whose end appears as remote as a thousand years ago.

To ever widening circles of cultured readers, of all creeds, and of none, it is hoped that this volume will be welcome. It lays no claim to the first or last word on the topics discussed, which are, perhaps, twice-told tales in more senses than one. The author, however, has tried to be candid and unprejudiced. While essays of this character have their defects and limitations, and many subjects deserve fuller and more careful development, it is possible that just such unpretentious treatment has its value as well, as a kind of modest introduction to more elaborate works. It is devoutly hoped that the book will serve to arouse more interest in its subject, doing its share to clear away the mist and usher in the light.

The essays, which have appeared chiefly in *The North American Review* and *The*

Atlantic Monthly, have been fully revised. Other papers are reprinted from the London *Jewish Quarterly Review*, *The Architectural Record*, *The Arena*, and *The Independent*, in the last several years before the World's Parliament of Religions at Chicago.

A. S. I.

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What Is Judaism?

What Is Judaism?

CHAPTER I

WHAT IS JUDAISM?

IT is curious that in our age of advance, when new light is shed upon every subject, and history has been almost reconstructed, with knowledge growing more and more, and the religions and races of mankind knit more closely together by travel, trade, and new conditions and currents,—it is indeed strange that the nature of Judaism should be still largely a *terra incognita.* The general ignorance respecting the Jewish religion is all the more surprising as its basis, the Old Testament, is not a sealed book, and the Jew, in all lands that assure him liberty, mingles freely with his neighbours of every creed and none.

Undoubtedly, many causes have contributed to prevalent fanciful ideas about Judaism. As the Jew has been practically under a ban—socially and politically—since the loss of national independence, it is hardly to be expected that his religion would receive a fair interpretation; but it was unavoidable that the prejudice against his race should be extended to his religion as well. If in our enlightened day this popular prejudice continues, although happily deprived of much of its violence, it is difficult to realise the accumulated odium in the past, when the Jew was a byword, and his religion an object of scorn. The student of history knows how in the early centuries Christianity was both misunderstood and maligned by the heathen world; no taunt or reproach was too bitter to be hurled against the Christians and their religious rites. It is suggestive that in later ages the Jews were to be made the target for similar abuse, but the heathen were not the aggressors.

If external conditions, then, have rarely been favourable for any adequate understanding of Judaism as a religion, the Jew can hardly be blamed for having lived largely

within his shell, so to speak, and formed a kind of state within the state in simple self-defence. But whatever the cause, Jewish exclusiveness has done its part to intensify public ignorance about Judaism. Rigorously debarred from society and the arts and professions in general, and with only the lowest occupations open to him, it is not to be wondered at that the Jew felt disinclined to make propaganda for his faith, and to vindicate its character in public discussion or learned treatise. Jewish apologetics are, of course, to be found. There is a respectable list of works in that department; but they were not popular in tone, and hardly designed for the general public. Freedom of speech is, after all, only a recent acquirement. Toleration is a blossom of very late date. The Jew had enough earnest work on hand—his conditions of existence were too precarious for him to enlighten the world as to the true meaning of Judaism. And yet, if the world only knew it, at times of the sharpest distress for Israel, in so-called dark ages and in the centuries of mediæval torture, Jewish poets sang of lofty ideals, and Jewish sages exhorted to the broadest ethical culture.

The Jewish home was sweet and inspiring; and the synagogue, often converted into a fortress to resist knightly violence or popular tumult, preserved the old tradition of the law and the testimony.

But those days are past, even if their oppressive shadow darken Russian domains. It is unwise and unnecessary to recall them in happy America. Here, where all religions possess the same inalienable rights, and each can pursue undisturbed its own path, to bless and benefit mankind, Judaism need not live within the shell. It can do its share to throw aside the exclusiveness which made the Jew a mystery in the past, and actively co-operate in the solution of world-problems, with every confidence in its capacity and usefulness. It can enter the lists as a living, working faith. What, then, is Judaism, for which such high prerogatives are claimed? What is its character, what its dogmas, what its numerical strength, what its mission? What are its propaganda, what its earthly and heavenly rewards?

1. Judaism is a religion of daily life. It is not a formal creed, or a scheme of salvation for the Jew only. It is a practical religion,

not a theoretical sentimentalism. It is conduct, rather than doctrine; for righteous conduct is the aim and purpose of every ceremony and rite. It is not a religion of asceticism, but of temperance and self-control. It has no theology in the common meaning of the word, and no dogmas that violate reason and strangle common-sense. It is a religion, not for Sabbath and holiday merely, but for every day. It has not one rule of conduct for the priest, and one for the layman; "just weights, just measures," is its law for all,—for the synagogue as well as the counting-house, for the home, the shop, the school, the forge. Its morality, however, is ethics based upon Revelation; the historic character of which is more than an accepted doctrine in Judaism,—it is an intuition, rather. Judaism, hence, is not a revelation of ethics, but the ethics of Revelation; and a similar Jewish intuition is the belief in one incorporeal Deity, the Creator and Ruler of the universe.

2. Judaism is a religion of growth, not stagnancy. It is largely a development. It has had its periods of ebb and flow, of blossom and apparent decay. Its history is a long-

continued conflict, both national and individual. Jewish thought was never inert and dormant. It is an egregious blunder to close Jewish history with Malachi, and with the few supplementary names and incidents which are given in the New Testament narrative. It is, perhaps, only after the Old Testament Canon was closed that Judaism may be said to have properly begun. Then arose the Talmud, which was law-book and literature, digest and debates, the growth of nearly a thousand years, which preserved the Jew from intellectual torpor, even if it intensified Jewish individualism. In its study the Jew learned to think. The story of the Talmud is the story of the conflict of opinion, and the intellectual wrestling sharpened every fibre of the Jew. To its folios all parties in Judaism have appealed for arguments. Each new development, each change in custom and ceremony, takes its point of departure from the Talmud. Every reaction, every attempt to restore the old traditions, is based upon the Talmud. And thus in the eternal battle of opposing views, which never touches the essence of Judaism but its outward form and raiment, Judaism has never

been allowed to be dormant. It has usually reflected the spirit of its age. The Jew was a rationalist under the Caliphs. He was sternly orthodox in the shadow of the Papacy. He is a liberal in Germany, a conservative in England. Judaism is not a cast-iron creed. It has shown capacity for development since the priests chanted on Zion's hill, and the Essenes, Pharisees, and Sadducees engaged in a death-struggle amid the dying embers of nationality.

3. Judaism is an organic, not a mechanicai religion. Its strength does not depend upon ecclesiastical councils and discipline, upon duly appointed synods and benefices, upon lavish endowments and costly cathedrals, but rather upon the universal consciousness of the Jew —the subtle, indefinable sense of unity through the long travail of centuries. This feeling can hardly be called one of nationality, for the Jew is a Frenchman in France, an Englishman in England, a German in Germany, an American in the United States. The sentiment is remarkable for its permanence and universality, and has been crystallised in the Jewish saying: "All Israel are bondsmen for each other." The syna-

gogue, too, is not a church in its ecclesiastical sense. It is a congregation, a community, an independent society, which elects its own rabbi, and is amenable only to its own laws and the majority vote of its members or trustees. It is strictly democratic. The rabbi is only the spokesman who lectures or preaches, but never claims special privileges save as teacher and interpreter. For charitable and educational purposes, a number of congregations may unite, but ecclesiastical discipline has entirely passed into abeyance in America, and in Europe it has reached its last stage of usefulness. There is no outward band, then, that holds Judaism together—its strength is from *within*. And that is sufficient for its ten millions of adherents throughout the globe.

4. Judaism is a religion of breadth. Its ethical standards will bear the test of the most searching modern criticism. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," "Thou shalt not vex the stranger," are characteristic texts. "Who shall ascend God's holy hill?" cries the psalmist. "He who is of pure heart and clean hands," is the answer. Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the Temple was

universal, and not tribal only. The prophets do not confine themselves to Jewry. Nineveh is as near to God as Jerusalem. The Book of Esther is admitted into the Canon, although the name of God is absent. The Book of Ruth celebrates the virtues of a non-Jewess, to whom David, psalmist, and the Lord's anointed, was to trace his descent. The rabbis plainly declare that the pious of all nations will become partakers of future bliss, which is not reserved for the Jew. Hence all propaganda is avoided. Judaism is not a missionary faith in the current meaning of the term. It sees in Christianity and Mohammedanism divine agencies, and admits freely their services in uprooting idolatry. It does not compass sea and land to make a proselyte, but Jewish traditional law seems to discountenance instead of encouraging conversions. The Jew is broad in his sympathies, unsectarian in his charities, and whether a strict conformist or not, knows no distinction of creed for humanity's sake. In view of the suffering he has had to endure from the narrowness of others, the Jew cannot be narrow. It is not so long ago that a rabbi of Frankfort, Germany, wrote a sym-

pathetic article on the benefits resulting from Christian missions. Pulpit interchange between Christian and Jewish ministers in America is by no means uncommon. Only a few years ago a Jewish writer pleaded earnestly in a representative Christian weekly for an international religious conference of all who believe in God, virtue, and immortality. The synagogue, if it has forms and customs for the Jew to which history has given sanction and power, has only love and warmth for humanity, the highest aspirations for human brotherhood. Its Deity is not the God of Israel only, but of all mankind.

5. Judaism is universal in its scope and influence. Its character is not to be judged by scattered laws and customs, but by its entire aim and mission. Its morality, which lights up Pentateuch, prophets, and sacred writings, and shines in later rabbinical literature, is all-embracing, and its tendency is just the reverse of tribal. Circumstance has compelled the Jew to assume often the appearance of a close corporation in his polity, religious and otherwise. It is hardly reasonable to think that the distinctive age-marks of his faith will entirely pass away,

but there is every probability, when conditions are more propitious, for the universal element in Judaism to become a more prominent factor in the world's enlightenment. Thoughtful American Jewish leaders no longer confine themselves to the synagogue. The education and elevation of the masses in our large cities will be regarded as a legitimate working-field for enthusiastic and capable Hebrews. The territory is widening year by year; with tact and energy a profound impression for good can be made, without interfering with the prerogatives of any denomination. It is true, the education and Americanisation of Jewish immigrants from abroad will provide a good deal of work for the Jew, and already enlists his earnest and active sympathies. But apart from such home missions, which he is not likely to neglect, there is no reason why he should not step to the front and co-operate in the task of human redemption from the evils of poverty and vice. A few are eminently successful in this field. There is earnest call for more teachers and workers in the engrossing problems of every great city. The relations of capital and labour clamor for satisfactory

solution. Social and economic reform, improved housing of the poor and working classes, the uplifting of the people to higher ideals, are duties of the hour; and of all men the Jew is peculiarly fitted to aid in their realisation. He is happily without sectarian taint, and his faculty of organisation, so useful in commerce and trade, would here receive marked development.

6. Judaism is old but not antiquated. It is not a sapling of a year's growth, an ism of the century, a fad of the hour, but a system which dates back three thousand years,—a mighty oak whose majestic branches are still full of sap and vigour. Its buoyancy has been proved by the vicissitudes of a singularly varied existence, its adaptability has been illustrated by every fresh migration of the Jew, and under every new condition of prosperity or serfdom. Its distinctive forms, which were designed for the Jew only, to extirpate the sin of idolatry and instil spirituality, reverence, the domestic virtues, and thus preserve Jewish vitality, are not necessarily burdensome. They have their compensations. The law is more of a crown than a yoke; and if later rabbinical enact-

ments have considerably increased the duties of the strict conformist—no compulsion is ever exercised as to the observance of the forms of Judaism, and full liberty is given the individual—the tendency has always been towards their simplification and adaptation. The statutes and ordinances in their purity are powerful reminders of the divine, mute but eloquent messengers, leaves and blossoms that beautify and brighten each day's monotonous struggle and teach the law of spiritual manhood reaching towards perfection. Jewish customs and ceremonies, the Sabbath, the festival, the prayer, the rite, are heirlooms which have been tenderly and faithfully transmitted from generation to generation. While time works its inevitable changes, enough survives from age to age to maintain pristine virtues and prove spurs to progress, not clogs on growth and development.

History tells what Judaism was in the past. Judaism in the present needs only a fair field, and courts no favour. The Judaism of the future is not an unknown quantity; for if it be true to itself and the best utterances of sage and prophet,

it will do its active share to spread the knowledge of God's unity and the brotherhood of humanity—the Jewish ideal and mission.

CHAPTER II

THE JEW AND THE CURRENTS OF HIS AGE

THERE are few more popular misconceptions—which have spread, too, in ranks that claim to be academic—than the widely accepted opinion of Jewish intellectual narrowness and self-complacency. Jewish thought in the long sweep of centuries is held to have been rigid, exclusive, wholly uninfluenced by the currents of each age—as fixed and unyielding as the fabled statue of Memnon, but responsive to no melody at each successive sunrise in the world's advance. In other words, it is claimed that there has been no intellectual development, in its proper sense, in Jewry, that sterile and rudimentary conditions have ever prevailed, and its Jericho of torpidity and ecclesiasticism has refused to fall, despite all the trumpet-calls of enlightenment.

Now, the slow rise of the most rational

opinions is a disheartening blow to the over-ardent lover of mankind. Is it so very long since it was stoutly believed that heretics had tails, or that there was some dim connection between a Quaker's conference and a rainy sky? The popular verdict as to the Jew shows as surprising logic. There has been nothing too absurd to say about him—a privilege he shares with priests, princes, women, and lawyers. He could not be in better company, only the lash cuts deeper in his case when the only fact exceptional about him has been the treatment he has received from his lords and masters, as if he were half criminal, half clown.

It is hardly the present purpose to enter into any consideration of the causes and conditions which have led to such fallacies of judgment. Some of these, doubtless, can be traced to the Jew himself, to his tenacity of belief and scorn of consequences. An uncompromising religionist is apt to arouse more dislike in certain minds than a man who is a "mush of concession." Unconsciously, there is often an unlovely aggressiveness in your man of resolute faith, especially when his tent is pitched among children of dark-

ness. If this has been the Jew's attitude, he would have only himself to blame for the burdens which he has borne. But just as the Ghetto was no original Jewish creation, being forced upon the Jew from without by conditions beyond his wish and control, so this familiar theory of an intellectual Ghetto with its accompaniments—its disdain of its age, its contempt of any vision outside of the synagogue, its limitless self-satisfaction, its conceit and arrogance—this view which dies so hard, is wholly un-Jewish and unhistorical.

Forces, it is true, have existed in Jewry, taking their cue from the environment, which from time to time have striven to produce a rigid cast of thought and action, with threats of the ban, if not the thumb-screw, the thunder, if not the lightning, of church tyranny. There is little doubt, for example, that the almost contemporaneous condemnation of Descartes' writings by the Synod of Dordrecht was largely responsible for the excommunication of Spinoza by the Amsterdam rabbinical authorities. Yet the genius of the Jew as reflected in the varied activities of his best and most repre-

sentative thinkers, from the era of Isaiah, has sought as persistently to break the yoke, to catch a wider rift in God's sky, a broader inspiration, and that without any colour of disloyalty but with the fullest reverence for the ancient religion.

No wonder that the Exodus has been regarded as Judaism's most significant point of departure, its most distinctive festival, for it has served as the very keynote of emancipation, an everlasting spirit-call for freedom, even in centuries when serfdom and degradation were among the inalienable privileges of man. In fact, the close mantle which apparently he delighted to wear in certain inflammable eras was due more to the instinct of self-preservation than to any innate exclusiveness. It is not narrowness of view to guard one's home against infection. There was never too much rose-water atmosphere in court and camp.

Although conditions thus had a tendency to keep the Jew in a kind of quarantine, Jewish thought has not been impervious to external influences. There has been a steady interrelation between Jewish and non-Jewish streams of opinion, points of contact at

certain periods of profound consequence in the history of civilisation. The Jewish mind has been open to impressions, it has recognised its duty to its age, and has been no laggard in the work of human advancement, in which its interest has been as keen and impassioned as it is to-day.

An early, and in many respects a classic, example of the readiness of the Jew to widen his horizon is afforded by the story of Philo and the Alexandrian school. When Alexander founded his famous city (332 B.C.), a Jewish colony was among the earliest settlers, and it did not take them many years to become so influenced by their environment as to write Greek with the fluency of an Athenian. In the more or less favourable conditions that prevailed for a considerable period under Alexander's immediate successors, they were Greek citizens without losing their religious identity. Soon there sprang up among them a school of writers, poets, dramatists, historians, who were not the least eminent leaders in literature and philosophy. Philo may be taken as the typical thinker of his time, and he is always termed Philo Judæus. Greek was then

largely the vernacular of the synagogue, and Homer, Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics were as much read by young Israel as the Pentateuch, the Psalms, the Prophets of Judæa.

Philo, about whose life only scanty details are preserved, could nôt have been a more loyal Jew, with greater reverence for his religion and firmer attachment to his special community, in whose defence he participated in an embassy to Rome. Yet he was broad enough to see goodness elsewhere, and he strove to fuse the wisdom of the Greek with the faith of the Hebrew, not from any desire to abandon his traditions, but to show their adaptability in a cultured age. Whether his system of allegory was a success or not, and whether his philosophy was accepted or not by his brethren in the flesh, these are inquiries absolutely secondary to the main issue—that a man like Philo, with his character, training, and standing could feel the necessity of reconciling his faith with current tendencies without being less a Jew. That he was rejected by his people, who preferred the interpretation of Palestine to that of Athens or Alexandria, and that his

writings owe their preservation to the Christian Fathers, with undoubted influence on the early theology of the Church, do not invalidate the position assumed. Certainly the point of contact in those centuries might have led to far-reaching consequences, if Roman supremacy had not precipitated a catastrophe which scattered philosophy to the winds and made the Jew only draw his cloak closer around him.

A no less suggestive cross-fertilisation of ideas took place in Spain when the caliphs founded their schools and gave such a marked impetus to the advancement of knowledge. Here the receptivity of the Jewish mind, its plastic character, its readiness to unfold and expand in a genial atmosphere, could not have been more superbly and convincingly illustrated. Long ages of devotion to study, which began in the home circle as the young child was taught the meaning of his religion and its symbols,—"Thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children!" reads the olden command,—this has predisposed him to the pursuit of learning. Under the Moslem ruler, and later under the Christian kings until the era of relentless persecutions changed the

scholar's pen into the pilgrim's staff, a distinguished coterie of thinkers were spurred on to independent research, and Arabic, in turn, became in a measure the synagogue's vernacular, while Jewish writers competed ardently with their Moslem contemporaries in literary skill.

It is beyond our present scope to allude to the Jew's versatility, which made him now a caliph's grand vizier, now a translator into Arabic of priceless works, as well as merchant, scientist, trader. To restrict one's self to the field of religious philosophical thought in particular, the point of contact was marked. So keen was the rivalry, so susceptible the Jewish mind, that, to quote the words of the late Professor David Kaufmann, of Budapest, in some respects the most erudite writer in his line for many decades, "Every more important achievement in the domain of Arabic philosophy was noticed, examined, utilised by Jews; the appearance of a new Arabic work was usually followed by its Jewish imitator." Although Dr. Kaufmann insists that this imitativeness does not imply slavish dependence, it shows none the less an intellectual openness in the

most important of all branches to the Jew—that of religious philosophy.

The men, too, who were influenced so markedly by current thought were the sweet singers of the synagogue—poets and moralists of the stamp of Gabirol and Judah Hallevi, esteemed the glory of mediæval Israel. Nor did they lose aught of fame. Their works are still retained in the traditional ritual and on the solemn days, so broad after all is the synagogue, which took its cue from the sages who formed the Old Testament Canon. These included the Song of Songs as well as the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes as well as the Psalms, as if they meant to symbolise the light and shade, the joy and sorrow in human existence, in the composite character of the Biblical books.

It is Maimonides (born at Cordova, 1137; died at Cairo, 1204) who presents, perhaps, the most salient example of Jewish adaptiveness in those centuries. He was the "eagle of the synagogue," the sage *par excellence*, of vast industry and extensive knowledge, judging from his exhaustive works. Yet this scholar of scholars, this profound rabbinical authority, whose condensed creed of Juda-

ism, termed "The Thirteen Principles," is accepted practically throughout the Jewish world, exclusive of some American congregations, this man of all men set himself the task of reconciling revealed religion and Greek-Arabic philosophy. In other words, he saw the necessity of harmonising the old and the new, and deemed current tendencies serious and divine enough to impel him to write his famous *Guide of the Perplexed*. This work, originally in Arabic, but now translated into various tongues, left its distinct mark on contemporary thought, furnishing ideas to later ages, from the Schoolmen to Spinoza.

Here, too, the main question is not whether this work is still of service, or whether its standpoint is hopelessly antiquated, with the disappearance of Aristotelianism in modern philosophy. The real fact for consideration is that a Jewish authority like Maimonides freely absorbed the views of his age, and was broad and open enough to attempt to reconcile current thought with his traditional faith,—Aristotle and Moses. It is true, his work was regarded as heretical by a few prominent rabbis, and his adherents and opponents in later years had sharp feuds of

their own. But he had written his book and given an example to his people, even if, like other thinkers of other climes and creeds, he was a solitary peak above the plain. Yet he was not entirely alone—there were other minds that absorbed as keenly. Then came the ravages of the Black Death and shameless persecutions, which again robbed the philosopher of his calm idealism, and made the Jew once more a helpless wanderer.

The Renaissance movement, with the spread of Humanism, was welcomed by the Jew as marking almost as Messianic an era as the French Revolution and the century of emancipation in its train. Here the point of contact was peculiar, for, instead of opposing the new ideas and ideals, he met them half-way and gladly opened his treasures of learning to advance their growth. That was none the less a period of cruel repression, and the exiles from Spain found it hard to gain a safe foothold anywhere in Europe. Yet the Jew could not have been more responsive to the currents of his time when a Reuchlin could become his pupil in Hebrew, and the disciples of Elias Levita could introduce Hebrew studies into Germany. Elias

del Medigo was not averse to being selected as umpire by warring factions in the University of Padua, while other Jewish teachers at the universities gave freely of their wisdom as their highest duty towards their age.

The Jew was to be borne swiftly along the stream of a movement which was to be followed by the Reformation. He might have been excused had he held aloof, but his passion for knowledge must have vent. He became poet,—Immanuel of Rome was a friend of Dante,—philosopher, astronomer, mathematician, in his enthusiasm. He gained fresh courage in the new atmosphere, and accompanied Columbus on his voyage, Vasco da Gama on his distant quest. He was among the earliest to see the possibilities of the printing-press, which was to spread also his literature, never designed to be a sealed book, but whose study was his highest duty. He could develop, too, into an ambassador from Turkey to the Venetian republic. In the flourishing mercantile states of mediæval Italy he could play an active rôle, and his sphere was not restricted to finance but extended to the handicrafts as well. He was quick to utilise every invention and to pro-

mote every industry, whenever the political laws allowed his freedom of choice and some certainty of tenure, and did not limit his vision to old clothes and the junk-shop.

No religious scruple stood in the way, nor any traditional barrier to prevent his imparting knowledge to the stranger without the gates, for he recalled the treasured opinion of one of his early fathers: "A non-Israelite who occupies himself with the law of God stands in the same rank as the high priest." No wonder Reuchlin's heart could go out to his teachers as he defended Hebrew literature from the malice of the obscurantists. So close, then, was the connection between the era preparatory to the Reformation and the teachers of the Humanists, without whose pioneer work, perhaps, Luther might have less signally triumphed.

These instances of Jewish participation in the great movements of history might readily be extended, and it might easily be shown how the activity spread to other lines besides religious thought, as can be observed to-day in every civilised land. If the objection is interposed that the illustrations are individual and cannot be regarded as characteristic

of the race, one might as well deny to Isaiah, to Micah, to the Psalmist, the claim of being Jewish and representative of Jewish thought. To have produced such broad genius, such impressionable minds, there must have been always a central fire in the heart of the Jewish race which leaped upward exultantly when the moment was propitious,—a storehouse of sympathy for humanity in its widest sense, and for human progress, which could be utilised by prophet or sage.

Among truly typical thinkers there was ever cherished a larger hope, a wider inspiration, which was not the idle cry of a child for a star but the deep impassioned yearning for human perfection and universal brotherhood as the goal to which law and statute, symbol and ceremony pointed. How pitiful that outside pressure, unrighteous conditions in church and state, have made the Jew's history a continuous tragedy and maimed him at times almost beyond recognition, so that often the caricature was taken for reality. Yet the miracle of resurrection was ever there, the blossom beneath the snow, the love of humanity which was unconquerable under every affliction. In the world's

welfare he read and felt his own welfare. He knew he would not wear for ever his gaberdine. He could bide his time. The day must break, the shadows pass away. The sword would change into the plough-share, the bitter taunt into brotherly love. Let suffering be the badge of the tribe—

> Till the world is wrought
> To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not.

What of the relation of the Jew to American life and ideals? Here his plastic quality has been illustrated in the work of representative men and women in every epoch, from the Colonial through that of the Revolution, and in the Civil and Spanish-American Wars. There is something divine in the American atmosphere, which causes Old-World rancours and prejudices to weaken and lose much of their keen edge under its influence. In the demands of American life, in the strain and spur of competition, with the closer contact enforced by school and shop, mill and factory, the creeds, consciously or unconsciously, are affected as never before, and the Jew, like the rest, is broadened by his environment. He enters gladly into the currents of his time

—whether he becomes a pioneer in Alaska or an up-builder in California, as he rears his department store in the great cities or plans his philanthropies without distinction of creed. He upholds the new education, is among the investigators in science, defends the public schools, is active in movements for civic betterment, and whether Democrat or Republican, feels the stir of his age. He is as proud of his Americanism as are the little children of the emigrant in the intoxication of their first flag-drill. Patriotism is to the American Jew a part of his religion, as was shown in the days of '76 and '61, and in the recent war with Spain, when even the Rough Riders had their Jewish quota.

Nor is the Jew less in touch with American ideals; they sound curiously familiar, for did not his fathers hear the slogan of old,—"proclaim liberty throughout the land and to all the inhabitants thereof"? America spells freedom under the law, as does Judaism. The American ethical standards are the old-fashioned ones of justice and morality, public and private virtue, even if these for the time are somewhat obscured by prevalent graft and greed. And has not Theodore Roosevelt

been termed a later Hebrew prophet? Why should not the American Jew be at one with his country and its ideals, and be aroused to his best as the years advance? No Ghetto has stained the American soil; no foul bigotry to deny the Jew the rights of man. He will be spurred on to breadth in life and thought, in sympathies and achievement. To-day America means more to the Jew than to any one else, for it is the only land that opens wide its gates to the persecuted and the down-trodden. He and his children can never forget their obligation in return, as loyally, modestly, and helpfully they do their part in realising the ideals of our Republic.

CHAPTER III

THE JEW IN THE UNITED STATES

THE buoyancy and vitality of the Jewish people and their religion have stood the test of a long series of migrations from early Biblical times to the present exodus from Russia and Roumania. Sudden and violent changes which have sounded the death-knell of many races and religions, or have fused and cross-fertilised them beyond recognition, seem only to have vitalised the Jew. As his faith was to be universalised, so his people were to be scattered from land to land, from East to West,—the divine method of preventing any relapse into the Bedouin stage of development, with Judaism, not tribalism, his religion.

Such migrations of varying magnitude in the past, from Palestine to Babylonia, Persia, Egypt, and Asia Minor; from the Orient to Italy, Spain, and Central Europe, have

occurred at critical periods, and were rarely voluntary but usually compulsory. There was generally no alternative between exile and death, apostasy and degradation. Then, as now, the Jew preferred the pilgrim's staff, the wanderer among the nations; and whether by the Guadalquivir or the Danube, in the dense forests of Germany or in the fertile plains of Italy, the people remained on the whole faithful to their traditions. Bible and Talmud kept them from becoming gypsies. Wherever they breathed the atmosphere of comparative freedom, they adapted themselves so thoroughly to each new environment that they added many a brilliant name to the science, philosophy, poetry, and statecraft of their day. And, glad at heart, they cherished the older prophets' dream of a golden age of peace and brotherhood for mankind—a dream which was never wholly shattered even in the agonies of an *auto da fé*.

It is now 250 years since the beginnings of what is likely to prove the most momentous migration in Jewish history occurred on American soil. It is not surprising that such an event should have suggested the idea of a general celebration among the Jews of the

United States. But, properly to understand the real significance of the first Jewish arrivals at New Amsterdam towards the end of 1654, it is necessary to consider the causes that led to their settlement and the circumstances which made it absolutely imperative for the Jew to seek a new home and a new opportunity. When the Old World offered no hope and little security or permanency, a New World was at hand for him and all who demand liberty as the first condition of existence.

On August 2, 1492, the great majority of the Jews of Spain were expelled, and after a brief stay in Portugal were scattered like criminals and outcasts among the nations. The act of expulsion was the culmination of a series of oppressions which ended their golden era in Spain in a night of unexampled horror. Turkey, Palestine, Venice, Poland, and Holland received the fugitives, who were long to feel the hand of their enemies even in apparent security. Thousands, however, still remained in Spain and Portugal who continued at heart Jews and secretly observed their ancestral customs, although outwardly they were good Catholics and leaders in church and state.

A day after the exile from Spain—one of those curious coincidences which occur so frequently in history as to be termed "providential"—Columbus set sail from Palos on his first eventful voyage. The close connection between the Jews and the discovery of America has now fairly been proved. It is known that several men of Jewish birth accompanied the Genoese, among them Luis de Torres, his interpreter; while his Jewish patron, Santangel, received from Columbus the first account of his discovery. Not only did astronomical works and scientific instruments prepared by Jews assist him greatly, but it was men of Jewish descent who finally succeeded in securing for him Queen Isabella's favour. In addition, the confiscated property of the unfortunate Jews was utilised for the expenses of the second voyage of Columbus. It was only historic justice, therefore, that America in later centuries should prove a welcome abiding-place for the Jewish people, and that the very steps which Spain took for their extermination should have paved the way for their signal prosperity—not the first time in history that an old-fashioned Biblical sentence should have

been verified, nor the first weapon forged against the Jew which has failed to achieve its purpose.

The first Jewish settler on North-American soil, whose name has been preserved, arrived at New Amsterdam on July 8, 1654, followed later in the same year by a storm-tossed party of twenty-three, presumably from Brazil, which country had shared with Mexico, Peru, Surinam, and the West Indies in the era of colonial expansion after the discovery of America. Brazil, however, had proved an undesirable home after the Portuguese had wrested it in 1654 from the Dutch, and allowed the spirit of the Inquisition full sway. Many of the residents returned to Holland or set sail for the French settlements and elsewhere in the West Indies; but others turned hopefully to New Amsterdam, which, with its Dutch masters, gave promise of happier days. How Peter Stuyvesant received them harshly, how he threatened their exclusion, how the Dutch West India Company directed him to grant them liberty to remain and trade, how gradually they grew in numbers and importance, how they obtained under English rule a larger share of

civil and religious freedom and were, with some exceptions, stout patriots in 1776, closing their synagogue when the British held New York,—these incidents form but the introductory chapter to the development of the community after 1812, when it began to furnish noteworthy names in the professions, in finance, and in trade. The list was largely increased with the decades before and after the Civil War, when its synagogues and benevolent institutions assumed statelier proportions. Hither came, in swift succession, all branches of the Jewish stock from the West Indies, Germany, Poland, Hungary, Roumania, and Russia, until now the small band of luckless refugees who had to endure a full measure of Stuyvesant's wrath in 1654 have grown into a population of a million and more and are a vital factor in New York's greatness.

The Jews were not slow to settle in other parts of the United States. In 1655, some went to Newport, Rhode Island, from New Amsterdam, to seek a more genial atmosphere; and their numbers were increased by the friendly attitude of Roger Williams's commonwealth. A century later, the com-

munity was to become the most prosperous in the land, with merchants of standing who made Newport the commercial capital years before New York assumed that dignity. The Touro synagogue and cemetery, the Lopez wharf, are reminders of old-time Jewish prominence and leadership in lines of industry. Philadelphia traces its earliest Jewish settler to 1703; its community kept pace with the general growth and supplied its quota of eminent names in science, education, and philanthropy.

In the South, the Jewish pioneers came early. They reached Georgia soon after Oglethorpe had founded the colony and were admitted as settlers in 1733. Like their brethren in New York and Philadelphia, they were resolute patriots in the Revolution; while, in South Carolina, Francis Salvador died too early to participate in the struggle, but was of the same patriotic type as Haym Salomon, who so powerfully aided in maintaining the Republic's credit, and upon whose favour James Madison called himself a pensioner; G. M. Seixas, the "patriot minister" of New York; Barnard and Michael Gratz of Philadelphia, stanch in their patriotism;

and others of their calibre who rallied in defence of American freedom.

The energy, persistence, and public spirit which marked the Jewish pioneers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when they participated in the activities of colonial times and contributed their share in the early decades of the Republic, were similarly displayed by their successors in the nineteenth century. They were among the settlers when the Ohio Valley was to be changed into busy cities and when Texas, California, and Oregon were to be admitted to Statehood. In the early development of Texas they took part in comparatively large numbers, both in the field and the halls of legislation, and Galveston recalls some of them in grateful memory. Among the eager gold-seekers in California, not many years passed before they became prominent in law, medicine, art, finance, and trade; while the Alaska seal-fisheries and mineral resources, the coal-fields of the Northwest and Canada, were to a great extent developed by the genius for enterprise of the California Jews. Perhaps in no single State in so short a time can so many notable names be mentioned in varied lines of usefulness.

A similar activity was shown in Oregon, where, despite the limited Jewish population, national and state positions have been filled by the pioneers and their successors.

From this necessarily brief summary one fact is clear—that the genial American atmosphere, in which all creeds and nationalities so wondrously flourish, has been distinctly favourable to the Jew's advancement. Think how the Roman Catholics, and Baptists, and Methodists have gained in numbers, wealth, and prestige on American soil in the past hundred years. Such conditions, however, are peculiarly stimulating to the Israelite, who is only emerging from practical serfdom and repression in nearly every land, and who now, for the first time in centuries on so large a scale, is enabled to show his versatility, strength, ability, and character. He is practically unlimited in ambition and scope—with every profession and pursuit open to him. He is thus completely identified with his American environment, differing in no way from his non-Jewish neighbour, save in religious belief. He resents being singled out as peculiar or un-American, if thereby it is inferred that he is an alien. Judaism is

as much at home in America as is Christianity; it is neither an anachronism nor a fossil.

What are the Jew's lines of occupation? He is active in business; he succeeds or fails according to his abilities. He enters every profession, is architect as well as plumber, is machinist, inventor, engineer, as well as merchant, lawyer, broker, peddler, drummer, or wage-earner in the sweat-shops. He can own mines or build theatres, run a ranch or a hotel. He can graduate from West Point or Annapolis, be painter or sculptor, financier or steamboat captain, motorman or policeman, steeple-jack or street-musician. He is emphatically no multi-millionaire, as some Baptists are, nor can it be said of him, as was stated a few years ago of Presbyterians, that sixteen prominent bank and trust company presidents in New York City were of that church and in good standing. His wealth is absurdly overrated: doubtless the proverb "as rich as a Jew" has much to answer for. Great masses of his people, not recent accessions exclusively, live from hand to mouth. A glance at the records of Jewish charitable societies in the large cities would show how widespread is Jewish poverty. He

has his millionaires, it is true, in New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, San Francisco, but the number is very limited. Moderate fortunes, due to thrift and enterprise, are more common; but even these are not so numerous as is popularly supposed. It was easier to disprove the notion that heretics had tails than that all Jews are rich.

What have been the Jew's contributions to the United States? The United States receives various benefits from the creeds and classes that seek its shores; it is influenced by all in varied fashion, from the days of the Pilgrim Fathers in New England to the era of Italian and Russian immigration at New York. What characteristics have been most promising in the Jew's record of 250 years? What traits most positive for good?

First, his spirit of enterprise. It is this quality which placed him among the pioneers in the East and West, as trader and producer, developing new lines of industry or perfecting the old, and adding immensely to the aggregate of America's wealth. Ambitious, persistent, and undaunted by circumstance, he developed from small beginnings to attain remarkable success. Restless ambition

spurred him to fresh endeavour until the goal was reached and fortune won. Hardly a town in the United States but bears witness to his activity, particularly in lines which are capable of wide extension. He has developed the little notions-counter into the department store, for example, with a completeness that would have been incredible a few decades ago.

Second, his breadth of view. The representative American Jew is never a bigot—he respects his neighbour's faith and usually gives to charities without distinction of creed, in the spirit of Adolph Hallgarten, whose bequests to institutions of various creeds included our coloured brethren. He is quick to meet his neighbour on common ground, so broadening in our time; and on Thanksgiving Day and other occasions he is glad to welcome his Christian brother to his pulpit. In periods of stress, as in the Paterson fire of 1902, the synagogue is opened cordially to the church without thought of payment, even for an occupancy of several years. He recognises his new environment and has outgrown the Ghetto point of view, at whatever cost to cherished traditions. He is quick to adopt in education and charity the

best modern methods, and joins cheerfully in movements for social reform and civic progress. Judaism is to him a broad universalism, which demands active participation in the life of the day—a looking forward and not backward.

Third, his patriotism. The Jew is intensely an American. His patriotism is almost a religion. His pride in the Republic is unsurpassed. The flag-drill seen at its best among the thousand children of recently arrived emigrants from Russia at the Educational Alliance, New York, is strikingly characteristic. Even as children, they are taught to revere "One Country, One Flag!" It is not merely out of gratitude that the Jew reveres America as his native or adopted land—his feeling springs as well from the consciousness that only where civil and religious liberty is assured can the Jew call any land his own. Hence his children love to sing the hymn "America," although, as in the case of recent immigrants in general, it is not a "land where our fathers died." The Jew ceases to be a Pole, a German, a Russian, after the first generation has graduated from the public schools—he becomes

an American. This sentiment accounts for the large number that volunteered in the Spanish War, whether as Rough Riders or ordinary soldiers and seamen. He fought as bravely for the South as for the Union in the Civil War. He took part in the Revolution and the War of 1812.

But his most valuable trait is his love of education. The spirit that moves a poor peddler in a New York Jewish quarter to study Kant's philosophy while on his rounds, or to read in faithful translation Herbert Spencer or Darwin, is peculiar to the Jew, and proves his moral superiority though his garments be torn and his occupation lowly. The same spirit impels the poorest to send his children to the public school and to aid them at great personal sacrifice to study for the learned professions; for he knows that education is the most enduring wealth he can bequeath. That Jewish students at school and college are among the most successful is the general testimony of teachers in every city; and, apart from natural aptitude, their high standing is due to the interest evinced by their parents and the value assigned to education. It is suggestive to note that

attention is being paid more and more to manual and technical training, with some good effort in the direction of agricultural pursuits. There is little doubt that the study of the Talmud for ten centuries and more has done much to develop his brain-fibre and make almost innate a love of learning which neither poverty nor privation can weaken, and which prosperity—that ruthless solvent of old-fashioned virtues—cannot wholly destroy. It is encouraging to note the same spirit among the wealthier element, an increasing number of whose sons are turning from trade and entering the learned professions, where pecuniary advantages are least regarded.

With positive qualities for good, then, and the list is not exhausted, and with such an honourable record for the past 250 years, what of the future of the Jews of the United States? Is there no rift within the lute, no shadow on the dial, no reverse side to the mirror which exhibits so many admirable qualities?

The rapid increase in the Jewish population, due chiefly to emigration from Russia since 1881, has furnished a problem of con-

siderable magnitude, which has severely taxed the energies of their American brethren. Yet the burden has been patiently and cheerfully borne and the solution is satisfactorily taking place without friction or annoyance. Save in overcrowded city centres, where foreign nationalities fasten root and thrive, the newcomers offer no problem at all and are proving an energetic and Americanised element of the people. They are spreading out in all directions, entering the various lines of trade and manufacture; and the more effectively they are distributed throughout the country, with many of them taking to the soil, they cease to be a subject of special concern. The diverse elements in American Jewry offer precisely the same difficulties as are presented by diverse elements in the general population and need arouse no greater apprehension. Unification is slow but sure in both instances, and one must patiently await results which cannot be hastened. What clouds, then, the future?

It is often said that certain tendencies in American thought are sapping the bulwarks of supernaturalism and thereby endangering vital Christian dogmas and doctrines. The

peril to Judaism is less in a wave of agnostic or sceptical thought than in actual conditions of life and environment, which make Judaism almost impossible without a radical readjustment either of conditions or of Judaism. It is admittedly more and more difficult to maintain olden customs and observances which were deemed inviolable a few decades ago; and, if the destructive process continues much further, what will be left of Judaism to be transmitted to the future? A very minute and unrecognisable quantity, indeed. The Jewish Sabbath is practically disregarded. Home ceremonials, which have so magically promoted family love and unity, have almost wholly vanished. If American liberty spells for the American Israelite disloyalty to his religion, it is not an unmixed blessing. There are many Israelites by birth, too, who never attend synagogue, refuse to associate with Jewry, and court Christian society as evidence of a superior culture and refinement,—some, but only a few of the first generation, submitting to baptism. Intermarriage is on the increase undoubtedly; few families are entirely free from what has always been regarded by the Jew as a bar

sinister, not from any intolerance, but simply because, if it is a natural solution of the Jewish question, it means also an inevitable dissolution of the Jew.

Now, it is possible to take too seriously these departures from the normal, these examples of desertion and disloyalty; for they are no new phenomena and have always existed, accounting partly for the world's small Jewish population. It is only the remnant that has been preserved, to maintain the faith in every era and to spring to new life and activity after each exodus or captivity. The same truth will be exemplified in the United States. There are, however, none the less hopeful signs that indicate a desire for restoration and upbuilding, and a resolution to be loyal to old-time standards. An increased impetus has been given to the training of rabbis; a publication society is doing excellent work; circuit preaching is organising new communities in the West; the women are banded together for helpful educational effort; while recent immigration has brought to our shores some men of learning and religious enthusiasm, who will prove useful in restraining further inroads of

American tidal-waves, if they are ever to be restrained. American Jewish leaders, too, while apparently lacking in qualities of statesmanship, are alive to present dangers. No *laissez-faire* policy can cope with disorganising elements that have gained such headway. To avert a catastrophe, the Jew must return to Judaism and its essentials; and his leaders must bend every nerve to reconcile American conditions with Jewish traditions. Adaptation is possible without surrender; and the genius of the Jewish people which has withstood an almost continuous crucifixion of nearly 2000 years is not likely to yield to Yankee notions and American expansion. It will prove, however, an interesting and spirited struggle between forces that resist and forces that invite amalgamation and dissolution. Much ballast and many barnacles from European, Asiatic, and African eras of history will have to be cast away. It is needless to be apprehensive about the next 250 years of American Israel. The remnant will survive and what is vital and essential in Judaism, and not accidental or Occidental merely, will have awakened to renewed and blessed activity.

CHAPTER IV

THE JEW AND THE WORLD

OF recent years the Jew, always a subject for treatment more or less heroic by kings, pontiffs, knights, and commoners, since he was made to assume the wanderer's rôle and told remorselessly to "move on" after any brief respite from the agony of unrest, seems to be receiving a little juster and more humane consideration. In civilised climes, at least, where civil and religious freedom is assured to all classes, the humanity in the Jew has become recognised, his services in the struggle for intellectual and religious liberty are more appreciated, and the edge of antipathy, so sharp and unrelenting of old, is losing much of its keenness.

Many factors have combined to bring about this result. Ours is a century which, with all its fads and fancies, is fatal to prejudices, however ancient. It is an image-

breaking age, that is disposed to see with its own eyes. Commerce, travel, education, a community of interests, the amenities of business and social intercourse, are giving the death-blow to a host of old-time bigotries and promoting good feeling and generous co-operation for the common welfare on the broadening borderland between the creeds. Popular errors are persistent, but, happily, not everlasting. One need not be surprised that the Jew has cut so sorry a figure in popular proverbs, and that his caricature and counterfeit still drag out an inartistic, if very obtrusive, existence on the stage and in the comic weeklies.

It is not our purpose to dwell for a moment on those bitter ages of crucifixion for the Jew, even if relieved here and there by sunset gleams of hope. Nor is it necessary to discuss what justification, if any, existed for the long-continued travail. That he has survived it all, that he has proved neither coward nor traitor, is surely not accidental. God's shadow still rests on history. There is no blank page between the Testament of the Past and the Testament of the Present. The unknown factor in events has come to be the

best known and most positive. The survival of the Jew and Judaism, this magnificent persistence in the face of a thousand odds, would indicate some high purpose. There must be compensation for suffering, like sunshine after rain.

Now the most remarkable indication of the civilised world's changed attitude towards the Jew is not so much the blessing of political emancipation bestowed at last; for he has merely shared in the triumphs enjoyed in this century by all creeds and opinions. His privileges are not exceptional in this respect. It is rather his appearance in literature as a subject no longer for derision, but for earnest contemplation and study, which is most significant. Since Lessing idealised Moses Mendelssohn, the Jew in fiction has acquired a certain continuity, which, despite aberrations and exaggerations, constitutes a most suggestive sign of the times. The world is apparently half ashamed of the past, and would make atonement. It admires pluck. The Jew has been the under-dog in the fight. He has been flung into the mud, and then blamed if his garments were soiled. He maintains his old attitude unflinchingly. He

adheres to his law. He is courageous, persistent, no idler or dreamer, but a worker in every field open to him. He is restless, eager, quick to seize favourable opportunity, patient, biding his time. Is the world touched at last? Does it realise that it need not go to antiquity for heroic types? The antique is at its doors in the despised Jew. Whatever the reason, it hastens to repair the wrong and utilises the Jew and his creed, his hopes, his achievements, his aspirations, as material for popular fiction, so that the Jew is no longer a stranger at the hearths of mankind. It was George Eliot, perhaps, who set the fashion, and her *Daniel Deronda*, with all its shadowy and fantastic outlines, embodied a useful lesson. Since her day, it is difficult to keep pace with the stream of books that illustrate the Jew in fiction, while countless articles in the magazines and reviews deal with the Jewish question, which has become a symposium, international and interconfessional, to which some of the clearest and most prominent writers and thinkers industriously contribute.

It is fortunate that the Jew's vindication does not rest upon fiction alone. It is possi-

ble for the Jew of fiction to be a distortion—to be an ideal, and give a wholly untrue picture. The modern author may err as much in one direction as the mediæval painter did in another when he gave us saints of Judæa with the features of Dutch and Flemish peasants. Contemporary history is the ultimate test. The position of the Jew to-day in life and thought has the basis of fact, not fiction. There is hardly a field in which he has not gained prominence. The rise of anti-Semitism is only one evidence of the Jew's strength and versatility. It is due chiefly to *Brodneid*—to envy. That is the secret of prejudice against the Jew.

There can be no doubt that the Jew's dispersion has made him a cosmopolitan. He possesses the faculty of adaptation. He is at home everywhere. Hence his versatility and range. Time was when he was restricted by church and state to the solitary occupation of money-lender, but now he roams at will in every field, although centuries of exclusive association with finance have admittedly developed his abilities in that direction. In his case, it is not the intensity of genius which has won him triumphs, but the genius of

intensity and concentration. His powers have been developed by environment. Old-time Jewish education was wonderfully stimulating. It is a blunder to speak of the Talmud as stunting and dwarfing the Jew. The study of the Talmud gave bent and nutriment to the Jewish brain and preserved the race from stagnation. Moral and religious forces, too, springing from the home and parental teaching, were active in shaping the young and giving them wholesome safeguards and balance-wheels.

What, then, is the Jew's record abroad to-day? What does he contribute to human knowledge, to science in all its branches, to art, philanthropy, learning, literature, in their myriad aspects? Does he preside over the destinies of states? Does he rule in the parliaments of the world? Does he lead in social movements as well as in the exchanges? Is he an interpreter of science as in mediæval times, in centuries called the Dark Ages, when he was the physician of princes, the adviser of kings and caliphs, poet, philosopher, grammarian, mathematician, ambassador?

It was once the intention of James Russell

Lowell to collect material which should illustrate the varied record of the Jew in every department of activity. He felt, perhaps, that justice had been scantily done to Jewish achievement and that such a roll-call would silence for ever the slanderer. If one would sketch in outline a chronicle of Jewish endeavour, and limit its range to the past few decades only, what an object-lesson would be unfolded!

It is about fifty years since Heine passed away. In poetry his place is still to be filled. But although Dusseldorf refused the proffered monument in his honour because he was of Jewish birth, the race which Heine loved and hated, scorned yet idolised in the contradictions of his genius, has attained in Germany indisputable prominence. In the liberal movement it was Ferdinand Lassalle, whose name will always be associated with Socialism, while now it is Singer, who was one of the most distinguished leaders in Parliament. Eduard Lasker, educated to become a rabbi, left an imperishable record among German orators. The gentle Berthold Auerbach, whose idealism was rudely disturbed by the persecutions in Russia, has

earned a permanent rank in German literature, along with August Bernstein, whose services in popularising science are not to be underestimated; Leopold Kompert, the poet of the Ghetto; and Karl Emil Franzos, with his picturesque novels and sketches of Roumanian and Galician life. One might add a number of popular and instructive writers, men of the calibre of Gustav Karpeles, Julius Rodenberg, Paul Lindau, and Ludwig Fulda. If we add the large and constantly increasing coterie of university professors, specialists in nearly every science and pursuit, who maintain the reputation of a Philip Jaffe in history, a Bernays in classical philology, a Gustav Weil in Arabic lore, an Abraham Geiger, Zunz, Graetz, and Z. Frankel in rabbinical and Jewish historical science, a Mosenthal in the drama, a Sanders in German philology, and a Meyerbeer in music, one may realise what a commanding array of talent is presented. The past few decades may be aptly termed a Jewish Renaissance in Germany in all that pertains to culture and enlightenment. M. Lazarus, H. Steinthal, and M. Steinschneider are universally recognised.

Perhaps in no country has the Jew become so thoroughly identified with his surroundings as in France. As a result, his position is confessedly high. In music, Halévy; in philosophy, Adolphe Franck; in Oriental studies, Munk, Oppert, Jos. Halévy, the Derenbourgs, and Darmesteter; in Biblical criticism and the science of religion, Salvador; in philanthropy and finance, Fould, Cremieux, the Rothschilds, the Pereires, and Baron de Hirsch,—are but a few names culled from a lengthy list of French Israelites who occupy a prominent rank in literature, art, science, education, and the public service. The voice of Gambetta is stilled, but the Jew in France has capacity and enthusiasm enough to be more than *dilettante* in the problems which beset his country.

If Denmark can produce a critic like Georg Brandes, Holland a painter like Jos. Israels, Russia a composer like Rubinstein and a sculptor like Antokolski (although both voluntarily shared exile with a million of their poorer brethren); if Italy can point to Maurogonato, Morpurgo, Luzzatti, Alatri —the brilliant contributions of the Jews of England within the past few decades alone

need not arouse surprise. The Earl of Beaconsfield will always be regarded as a Jew, although he is buried in Hughenden churchyard. No conforming Jew could have more ardently championed the cause of Israel. Disraeli's name in statecraft, Montefiore's deeds in philanthropy, are perennial. Sir George Jessel became Master of the Rolls without losing his interest in the synagogue. Lord Rothschild does not find it inconsistent with his dignity to preside over a society for the education of poor Jewish children. Sir Julian Goldsmid can petition Parliament in behalf of the persecuted Jews of Russia. To Schiller-Szinessy is largely due the revival of Hebrew studies in England: and Neubauer and Schechter continued the work. In mathematics Sylvester is a national authority. In Biblical criticism Claude G. Montefiore has rapidly won fame; he is one of a number of scholars who have advanced in many ways the standing and influence of English Judaism. In technical education Sir Philip Magnus is an authority. It was England's chief rabbi, Dr. Herrman Adler, who was invited by a society of Christian clergymen to lecture on

"Sanitation as Taught by the Mosaic Code."

There is every likelihood that Israel may enter more energetically on a practical work, that its leaders in civilised lands may co-operate in the task of social and economic reform, that Jewish wealth and intellect may unite with the thoughtful and benevolent of every creed, to uplift mankind to a higher level of righteousness. The Jew makes no propaganda. No one need be a Jew to share eternal bliss. The Psalmist sprang from non-Hebrew stock, and in one of his most expressive psalms, still recited in the synagogue, makes purity of heart and cleanliness of hands the conditions for entering God's tabernacle. If the Jew should devote the energy and concentration, which have made him so successful in finance, trade, the arts and sciences, to the solemn problems of human betterment, "loosening the bands of wickedness, undoing the heavy burdens, freeing the oppressed, and breaking every yoke," the Messianic age would advance with rapid strides. The unsectarian benevolence of Jewish philanthropists of the stamp of Montefiore and Hirsch and the numerous

benefactions by wealthy Jews, "without distinction of creed," are harbingers of the future, faint foregleams of coming sunshine that shall brighten and strengthen and unify humanity.

Single characters from Jewish history—Moses, Ruth, Elijah, Samson, the Maccabees—have been seized by composers and made the subjects of elaborate musical treatment. But what a theme for a symphony is the entire history of the Jews! The first movement should embody the Jew's *Lehrjahre*—his centuries of apprenticeship, from the era of the patriarchs to the captivity. The second should illustrate his *Wanderjahre*—his centuries of wandering, from the Babylonian exile almost to our own era, marked still by exile for the Jew in benighted lands. The third movement, which should vie in grandeur and joyous exaltation with Beethoven's matchless "Choral" symphony, might depict the Jew's *Meisterjahre*—his epoch of mastery, when the prophet's ideal of a purified humanity, united, uplifted, and glorified—"Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us?"—shall be universally acknowledged. What a field

here for genius and science! Passionate longing, ardent tenderness, profound compassion, fiery aspiration, rapt devotion, must find their musical expression. Perhaps some Rubinstein of a later day may deem such a theme worthy of his powers. It was Spohr who devoted an entire symphony to "The Power of Sound" to suggest that man is accompanied by music from the cradle to the grave. When the "Israel" symphony is written, let it illustrate "The Power of Righteousness," for that is the flaming text of prophet and sage, of law and psalm, of testament and code, the *leit-motif* of the Jew in history.

CHAPTER V

HAS JUDAISM A FUTURE?

IT is difficult to secure a just and unbiased interpretation of Judaism as a modern religion, because the Jew is treated either with superlative praise or superlative condemnation. The want of due proportion in the estimate in both cases leads to faulty generalising and gross injustice. For the Jew is neither angel nor fiend, but a profoundly human animal with all the defects and virtues, original and acquired, that are common to mankind, "Jew and Gentile, bond and free." Perhaps on the whole his enemies have done less harm than his friends. People like to be agreeably disappointed. It is pleasant to realise that the average Jew is certainly no fiend; and it is always more or less of a shock to discover that our idol is necessarily of clay. The Jew, then, is neither a Daniel

Deronda nor a Fagin, neither a Shylock nor a Nathan.

That the Jew is treated as a rule with a prejudice which either exaggerates or distorts the truth, is due almost wholly to the amazing popular ignorance of his history and religion—an ignorance which, unhappily, is not confined to caricaturists in the comic weeklies or playwrights who revel in hooked noses and flashy jewellery as essentially Hebrew characteristics. Even to Thomas Carlyle, Judaism is simply a religion of "old clothes." So cultured and refined a critic as Goldwin Smith seems as much irritated when he touches upon the Jew as was Haman when he saw Mordecai at the gate. It would be harsh to say that the Jew is made a man of straw, a kind of theological scarecrow, dating from the early centuries, and sent adrift down the ages as a perpetual object-lesson in irreligion, contumacy, formalism, greed, to guileless children of light, who give him an extra kick or two now and then, to keep themselves in practice, and satisfy their disingenuous piety. But is the charge without historic basis?

Practically, the Jew who serves the nine-

teenth century moral and adorns its tale is the Jew of Gospel records—the Pharisee of the Pharisees, with all the reputed and none of the reputable traits of his class. If he is referred to in sermons and hymns, he is still the Jew of the New Testament. It is Caiaphas and Judas Iscariot who are his representative men. He is a Palestinian, wears broad phylacteries, and utters ghastly imprecations on his enemies in a language which can be understood only by the sacred few. Let him be anathema.

If the Jew, then, is so caricatured, need it excite surprise that Judaism receives as scanty justice? It, too, is relegated to the past, to the lumber-room of antiquities. It is to be exhibited in a Semitic museum, forsooth, with the fossils and remains of primitive religions. Its rites and ceremonies are to be illustrated in glass cases for the special delectation of candidates for the ministry. It is to be dissected and analysed for the benefit of students of comparative philology. It can be made to furnish interesting data in the fields of ethnography and anthropology. In one word, it can be tolerated as a skeleton or a corpse, but not

as a living organism. It may be granted a past, but no present can be admitted and no future dare be insisted upon.

The Jew pleads for justice, not for glorification. His critics should cease to view him with the telescope, as if he were an occupant of another sphere. Let them abandon their microscope as well, in their fondness to detect the most minute defects, and lay aside favourite spectacles through which only their own mental strabismus can be discerned. Let them judge the Jew as he is. Let them study Judaism as it is. They will discover that both are very much alive. The time is past for labelling Judaism as prehistoric or the Jew as belonging to the extinct civilisations of the East, with the Phœnicians, Hittites, and the rest. Call him an arrested development, if you like: a survival, an anachronism. He has survived, because, numerically weak, he has been spiritually strong. He has resisted his environment with all of his contradictions and limitations; he has withstood with heroic endurance opposing forces, and he withstands them still. The very methods adopted to extirpate him have been his sal-

vation. The weapons forged against him, strange to say, have been his protection. In losing Palestine, he gained the universe. He was denationalised to become an international and cosmopolitan. The Orient was only one phase of his history. Just as the Babylonian captivity cured him for ever of idolatry, his world-wandering is teaching him the universal spirit which is at the basis of Jewish prophetism. The remedy was radical, because the disease had reached its crisis and heroic measures were imperative.

It is an egregious blunder to consider Jewish history synonymous with Biblical history. The Old Testament tells simply of Jewish beginnings. The greater Jewish exodus did not end with the departure of the Israelites from Egypt. That historic migration still continues. The Hebrew, as the name etymologically suggests, is the emigrant of history—from the time of Abraham to our own age the movement continues. What is occurring in Russia, the landslides in recent decades from Germany, Poland, Roumania, this is but a grim repetition of the long series of migrations that mark every century. It is Persia in one epoch, Egypt in another,

Italy and Greece in their turn, then Arabia and Christian Spain, Central Europe, England, France, all links in an endless chain. Yet, despite the constant shifting of condition and environment, there were many breathing spells for the Jew when he could prove hammer as well as anvil, and become more than a silent factor in the world's advancement. The story of the Jew's influence on civilisation, the record of his services in the arts and sciences, in literature, music, philosophy, and statecraft, is still to be written. The brief monograph of Schleiden requires to be supplemented by a more pretentious work of wider range.

If the critic of Judaism desires to gauge that religion accurately, he must familiarise himself with the history of the Jew in every land; he must follow the devious windings of his record East and West. He must account for that marvellous vitality which has been his preservative, and the unexampled adaptiveness which made the Jew at home, whether he saw the Guadalquivir or the Vistula at his feet, the Thames or the Euphrates, amid the orange groves of Sicily or the plains of Arabia—an adaptiveness

which he still displays as settler in Australia, South Africa, or the Argèntine. The critical inquirer, too, should ascertain the Jew's record in the lands of his dispersion and his relation to the state, however insecure his right of domicile. Did the Jew originally seek a Ghetto, or was it not an enforced seclusion as if he were contamination and needed to be kept aloof from the rest of mankind? Did the Jew avoid society and mingle only with his special clan, or was not that exclusiveness fostered and maintained by civil and ecclesiastical enactment? Was the Jew always a dealer in "old clo'," a money-lender, the pawnbroker of humanity? The French Crémieux and James Darmesteter, the English George Jessel and Moses Montefiore, the Dutch Godefroi and Josef Israels, the German Edward Lasker and Berthold Auerbach, the Russian Rubinstein and Antokolski, George Brandes in Denmark, Luigi Luzzati in Italy, Emma Lazarus in America, are names of our time, who are but successors of illustrious leaders centuries ago in varied fields, Jews who served the state under caliph, king, and pontiff, who aided powerfully in the revival of learning, in the

discoveries of science, in the dissemination of knowledge and literature. The true student of Jewish history, too, must become acquainted with the inner life of the Jew and the story of the synagogue's development, its devotional and intellectual range, the growth and ramification of Jewish law and custom, which became burden and blessing both, a crown as well as a yoke.

If his inquiry has been genuine, the critic will realise that the Jew's history, far from having ended when the temple fell and Jerusalem became Ælia Capitolina, has been and is still a continuous record. If the study has been thorough and not superficial, it will be found that Judaism, too, has been in constant growth and change, and is in itself a striking illustration of the theory of evolution. Whatever views one may hold of the composition of the Old Testament and the respective dates of its books, to speak of the prophetism of the patriarchs is as much an anachronism as to refer to the rabbinism of Moses or the Judaism of the Judges. One must be prepared to admit distinct phases in the history and development of Judaism, from Abraham to Moses, from Moses to

Ezra, from Ezra to Jochanan ben Zaccai, who founded the school from which Talmudism sprang; from the sages of the Talmud to the mediæval rabbis with whom the rabbinical era began; from Maimonides and his successors with the development of local codes and customs, which became the orthodoxy of their age, to Mendelssohn, the forerunner of a new epoch, contemporary with the French Revolution on the one hand and the birth of the American republic on the other. Judaism is thus a growth, not an instantaneous creation. The marvellous changes it has witnessed from the day when the Israelites received the olden tabernacle, with its minutiæ of worship, to its latest developments in cultured lands of our time, are but forecasts, perhaps, of greater changes to come.

What, then, of Judaism's future? What will be its final phase, after the travail of ages, the crucifixion of the centuries? Surely the solution of the Jewish problem cannot be the dissolution of Judaism, the total absorption of the Jew by the nations, his abrupt disappearance from the field. Leaving out of the question all theological prejudices, and facing the problem as students of history,

the Jew's persistence on the stage of human effort, despite ten thousand odds, is not likely to weaken as the ages advance. He has more factors in his favour than ever before. The world has grown. It is ceasing to be a battle-ground of the creeds, which are slowly becoming lines, not walls. Ugly hatreds and prejudices still are held, but the borderland of the religions is widening day by day, as their agreements, not differences, are kept in view.

The ultimate phase of Judaism baffles inquiry as much as the ultimate phase of human progress. Two opinions, both purely speculative, may be given here. Each is stoutly advocated, with proof-texts in abundance. The one sees the future of Judaism in a rehabilitated Jewish state, with Jerusalem its capital, which shall prove a court of arbitration for the nations, thus diffusing peace and happiness throughout the universe even as the sparks of the sacrificial offerings fly upward. The other finds the future of Judaism not in the absorption of the Jew by the nations, but in the absorption of the nations by the Jew, the thorough permeating of mankind by the spirit of Judaism,

as manifested successively by Christianity, Mohammedanism, and the religion of those who recognise God, virtue, and immortality. It claims that the tendency in all modern faiths is toward unity, simplicity, and purification; that as the process continues with the widening of the ages the nations will slip off their theologies and theogonies and derive more comfort from the prophet than from the casuist. If in the final outcome all forms of faiths disappear and a new combination arises, the law of the conservation of spiritual forces must still hold sway, and not one jot or tittle of the inspiration in the Testaments that have impelled mankind to righteousness will ever be lost. The resultant religion will not be different in spirit to the declaration of the Pentateuch, which is voiced by the Christian Gospel and finds its echo in the bibles of many creeds: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." When the nations shall have reached the heights of perfect brotherhood, Judaism's future will have dawned. It will cheerfully lay down its shield and sword, its rod and staff. The end of religions will have come in the birth of religion!

CHAPTER VI

THE JEWISH HOME

IN our rapid-transit age, pious sentiment has lost much of its potency, and cherished traditions that enforced certain vital truths disappear as surely as the trees that once gave beauty and shade to our city streets. We cannot pause by the way for quiet reverie; we dare not rest in our era of competition. The wheels must incessantly turn, the energies be urged ever at breakneck speed. Home, affection, family happiness, the household altar around which cluster such inspiring ideals, all must be imperilled, if not sacrificed, in the mad race for gold, fame, preferment. And the danger threatening that magic isle of safety, the home, can no longer be denied.

Undoubtedly, Jewish ideals suffer, like ideals in general, from the spur and strain of present-day conditions, and much that was

for ages regarded as sacred and inviolable in character and custom has vanished in the change of clime and environment. Much, however, is still unaffected, so strong and time-proof are the olden foundations. Unlike the temple of Philæ, with its wondrous associations, which has been gradually submerged with the introduction of modern irrigation methods in Egypt, the Jewish home, with its memories as historic and venerable, continues practically unchanged in spirit, even in our American atmosphere. Its graceful lines are as clear, its inspirations as effective, its basic principles as potent as ever. Now, the American Israelite does not wish to be differentiated from his brother of another creed in all that pertains to citizenship, nor does he desire to be singled out for praise or censure as if he were an anomaly or an anachronism. Yet his home is certainly unique, and he need not be unduly sensitive if he be asked for the secret of that household's charm and vitality. What qualities give it undefinable power? What formative influences are enshrined under its roof to make it one of the chief factors in the Jew's preservation? What subtle magic, even

to-day with so many disintegrating tendencies, invests it with such strength and permanence? In other words, what does the Jewish home stand for?

1. It stands, first, for religion. That element is its basic principle, which enters as much into the home as into the synagogue, and in some respects is more prominent in the household. It associates religion with the daily life of the family and the individual, and blends ideal influences with the domestic atmosphere. On the very threshold, on the door-post of the house, is seen a rectangular piece of parchment, inscribed with two sections from Deuteronomy—a Mosaic command scrupulously observed for thousands of years—which embody the foundation of Jewish belief, the unity of God and the injunction to love Him with heart, soul, and might, and to teach that belief to one's children—"and thou shalt write them on the door-post of thy house and on thy gates." With such a symbol ever present, the religious environment is undeniable. The historic festivals are scenes of family reunion. Sabbath eve is welcomed by a special ceremonial —when the Sabbath light is lit, emblem of

happiness, and the double loaf of bread adorns the table, to signify the double portion which the Israelites of old were to gather in the wilderness on the sixth day, so as to keep the Sabbath holy. And even if in our keen competitive era a closed Saturday is impossible among the large majority of employees and employers, some distinction is preserved, the women and children attend service, household work is lightened. Each festival has its appropriate greeting, in whose message young and old share. There is blessing after meals, with traditional songs and melodies for all. There is nothing harsh or repressive in such an atmosphere—it spells joyousness, mutual affection, domestic peace. The home is in the shadow of the Almighty, who is no tyrant, but Father, Counsellor, Friend. It is an altar, with the parents as priest and priestess, and the impression is never lost on the children.

2. It stands for the historical consciousness of the Jewish people, being thus a school of knowledge and loyalty. Each prayer and ceremony, each festival and traditional observance, all have a meaning and a history which the parent is commanded to make

known to the child as the highest duty. These recall the past with wonderful vividness and become eloquent object-lessons, as scenes of defeat or triumph, of the glory of national independence or the shame of exile are depicted. The race-consciousness is thus early developed, and has something ennobling in its call to loyalty and sense of kinship with the leaders who have passed away. Thus, from childhood the boy and girl learn the story of their people. As they witness the Passover ceremonies, the centuries of serfdom in Egypt—a dim forecast of later serfdom in modern lands like Russia and Roumania—flash before their vision, and how genuine is the feeling of gratitude! As they learn the graceful lessons of Tabernacles, the harvest festival, when, amid thanksgivings for the fruits of the season, they are to remember the lowly huts wherein their ancestors sojourned when emigrants from Egypt, are they not taught humility and the law of modest living? When they light the lights on the feast of Dedication, the era of the Maccabees is brought close to our time, inspiring them to be loyal to their religious duties, whatever the obstacle. Hence the

home is a place both of worship and of instruction.

3. It stands for the unities of family life—those essential virtues which bless humanity and sanctify the home. Nothing can surpass the affection, the mutual helpfulness, the sentiment of reverence that unify the typical Jewish household. Parents and children vie with each other in intensifying and deepening the atmosphere of love. Under such conditions, happiness can result even if there is an absence of wealth and glitter, and the quiet, gentle life is preferred to social extravagance. The spirit of domestic love which permeates "The Cotter's Saturday Night" unconsciously suggests the Jewish home—the ties that bind parents and children are enduring in childhood and maturity, stretching out through every experience. In the ambitions of their sons and daughters, in their tasks and troubles, the parents show the keenest sympathy, always their patient and kindly advisers, ever spurring them on in their studies and pursuits, and placing before them the loftiest ideals. And, in turn, the child has respect and reverence for the parent, makes rapid progress in school, largely be-

cause of parental interest, and develops steadily along helpful lines under the impetus of a cultured home.

Need it be surprising, then, if the Jewish home stands for such vital factors, that its influence should be so unmistakably reflected in the status of the Jew—in his character, aims, acquirements, ideals? If in the past that home was a preservative, nourishing and shielding the most beautiful virtues, and furnishing examples of domestic peace and purity in ages when courts were dissolute and people were given over to coarse amusements and degrading superstitions, is it to be wondered at that its influence proves so salutary in our era? It still has power to preserve from fashionable vices, to insure marriage sanctity, to inculcate habits of self-restraint and self-control. The most formidable of present-day evils are intemperance and divorce, and these have reached proportions that are ominous for the future. Now, there are no statistics as to intemperance among Jews, simply because cases are so infrequent; and it may safely be affirmed that a Jewish drunkard is a rarity, and still rarer any instance where a home has been

destroyed by a drunken parent. There is an innate horror of excesses and vicious living—the home example has instilled the lesson of self-control and moderation. Undoubtedly the dietary laws have accustomed the Jew to habits of self-restraint. It must not be imagined, however, that his home atmosphere is one of repression, of gloom, of asceticism; it is just the reverse, and hence there is little danger of swinging to the opposite extreme in later years. As to the divorce evil, here, too, there is a suggestive absence of data for generalisation; but instances are exceedingly rare, especially where traditional principles are essentially maintained. No apprehension need be felt, under such safeguards, that the evil can ever gain a firm foothold in representative Jewish circles.

The subject now presents itself as to Christianity's influence on the Jewish home, and as to any recognition of its worth. The thoughtful, intelligent Jewish home cannot but acknowledge elements in the Christian religion and practice which make for human betterment, and which here on American soil have such magnificent expression in agencies that uplift and refine. Of course, this is a

matter which, if discussed at too great length, might lead one into the labyrinth of theology and Scriptural interpretation. Without hesitation, the Jew accepts the spirit of the new movement which emphasises the central unities of all religions, whatever are the points of disagreement that set the creeds apart. He has too long suffered from the narrowness of others to cherish the narrow outlook. He feels the borderland widening and does his duty, when he consistently can, to bridge over the chasm and soften old-time asperities. The Ghetto was not originally a Jewish creation, but was forced upon the Jew with the gaberdine and the yellow badge; and he is held responsible for an exclusiveness that is not inherent in Judaism, for a hateful and bigoted point of view which is to be credited to the persecutor, not to the persecuted. To-day the Jewish home is as open as was Abraham's tent in the legend. There is no uplifted spear at the portal, no hostile air within, but the spirit of the Mosaic command, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," and of the Hebrew prophet's declaration, "My house shall be a house of prayer for all nations." The broad teachings

of the Jewish home, its kindly attitude towards mankind, find eloquent expression, not in mere sentimental phrases, but in the growing tendency of Israelites to bequeath gifts to education and charity, without distinction of creed.

In this analysis of the principles for which the Jewish home stands, there has been no conscious exaggeration. Traits have not been idealised, nor doctrines too broadly interpreted. In fact, a certain restraint has been felt, as if one were reluctant to describe its atmosphere, for it courts no publicity or recognition—a restraint, perhaps, which has often led to a want of requisite emphasis here and there. The genial culture that prevails, the refinement and simplicity which are characteristic, it has been shown, are combined with a notable breadth of view. It is more than a mere dwelling, a place to eat and sleep which is often regarded as a synonym for home—it is school, altar, shrine. Here the child is taught reverence and his elder, self-control. Here education is held to be the truest and most permanent form of wealth, and life considered but preparation for higher existence. Here religion is associated with

daily conduct, and some self-sacrifice is demanded. Here it is constantly taught that all religions which make for goodness are divine, and the pious of all creeds are sharers in future bliss. The universal elements in the olden faith are emphasised in the broadening and more helpful tendencies of the time. Certain picturesque elements when the environment was more exclusive may have passed away, but enough survives to make it a permanent factor for good and an object-lesson to the stranger without the gates.

CHAPTER VII

WHAT IS JEWISH HISTORY?

IT is generally held that the history of the Jews ended with the fall of Jerusalem; the fact is, however, that it really began from that date, as the Jew lost a little strip of soil and gained contact with the world instead. In other words, instead of continuing as a petty Eastern dependency, with its narrow limitations, the Jew became from that time an international factor. Long before the capture of Jerusalem by Titus, a change had become inevitable, as the Jews, after the captivity in Babylon, fell under the sway of Egypt, Syria, and Rome. The periods of independence after the return under Ezra, and, later, under the Maccabees, were brief and transient.

Considering Palestine merely as a kingdom, and from the political point of view alone, it is clear that its conquest could not long have

been delayed. Its position was too tempting to escape notice; and the stronger it grew the more inevitable became its vassalage to one of the great Powers that then, as such Powers do now, swallowed up the small nations. The game played in Bible times by Assyria, Babylonia, and Egypt was continued in later centuries—in the era represented by the hiatus between the Testaments —by Persia, Syria, and Rome, particularly when the successors of Alexander the Great fought for supremacy. Palestine was practically in the position of Poland, when the latter proved so choice a morsel for Prussia, Austria, and Russia to divide between them towards the end of the eighteenth century.

Now was to begin the real history of the Jew, with all its lights and shadows in the lands of his dispersion; and, because he carried a very old book with him, his Law and his Prophets, he was enabled to be at home everywhere and become a good citizen in any land that assured him civil and religious freedom.

Many interesting points are connected with the Jews' dispersion which are never touched upon in school histories and hence

are probably unknown to the general reader. In the first place, the extent and duration of his wanderings are almost incredible at this date. Call it a migration, rather than a wandering, and a better idea can be given of the spirit of Jewish history, which has been a series of migrations, voluntary and compulsory. In this respect, the Jew is no exception to the general law upon which our modern civilisation is based, which is that of migration. Language, handicraft, trade, culture, all that we term the fruits of civilisation, are largely, if not wholly, due to the migration of peoples from land to land, clime to clime, from the mountains to the plains, as a more favourable home was sought, and as race and tribe yielded to the advance of the stronger. The Jew's ceaseless migrations wonderfully tended to his vitality, and developed him into a cosmopolitan, with his creed to-day more universal and his influence wider than was possible in the days of his beginnings on Palestinian soil.

Now whither did he migrate, when the Roman plough was driven over the site of Jerusalem? He had been used to wandering before that date—he could be found in large

numbers in Egypt, in Greece, in Italy, in Asia Minor; but now he had to seek a wider home. In the West, he followed the Roman soldier along the Rhine, in Gaul, in the forests of Bohemia. Undoubtedly the Jew's earlier appearance in Greece, Asia Minor, and Rome had much to do with the rapid rise of the Church, for he was beginning to familiarise the heathen world with the Scriptures and thus prepare the ground for Christianity. In the East, he went to Persia, Arabia, and India, penetrating the farthest realms of the Orient. His presence in Arabia had much to do with the rise of Islam, for Mahomet drew much of his inspiration from the Bible and the lore of the rabbis.

What was his occupation in those early centuries preliminary to the so-called Dark and Middle Ages? In Rome, the catacombs, with their Jewish and Christian emblems rescued within a few decades from a sleep of nearly two thousand years, show that both Jew and Christian, exposed alike to pitiless persecutions, fled underground to hold religious worship and bury their dead. In favourable times, however, the Jew emerged from seclusion and, thanks to his genius for

language due to early education and his aptitude for trade, he became an intermediary between Europe and the Orient, not only in the world of commerce, but also in the world of thought. His caravans tapped the richest lands of the Far East, bearing spices, silks, gems, fruit, etc., for the Western market. He was to reveal as well the treasures of Greece and India, and in the rôle of translator he opened new vistas of philosophy, science, and folk-lore.

Jewish history tells a story of almost constant persecutions—from the era of Justinian to that of the latest czar. The expulsions have been harrowing, from England (1290), from France (1181), from Spain (1492), from cities and smaller kingdoms with ever-increasing hardships. No wonder that the legend of Cartophilus, the Roman soldier, first told in the thirteenth century, became known as that of the Wandering or Everlasting Jew; for the spectacle of hosts of Jews ever moving from place to place was a common one in those centuries, and it seemed to be regarded as a duty, by rulers and the people, to intensify the curse, and thus by the most incredible enactments

help Providence to humiliate and degrade the luckless wanderers. They suffered numerous restrictions in trade, occupation, dress, and dwelling. A Jew-badge, consisting usually of a yellow bit of cloth, wheel-shaped, was affixed to the garment of old and young, while pointed hats were worn. They had their own special quarters, often designedly in the most unsavoury section of the cities, —the Ghetto was general throughout Europe and is still preserved in the Mellah of Morocco. Intermarriage with the Christian was forbidden, the employment by them of Christian servants was prohibited; in some countries the annual number of marriages among themselves was limited by law.

The expulsion from Spain, a land associated with the fairest memories, in which Jews had attained high rank in literature, science, and statesmanship, was the bitterest blow they endured since the fall of Jerusalem. During Torquemada's fifteen years in office as head of the Inquisition, eight thousand Jews and Maranos—the latter were pseudo-converts—were put to death, and more than six thousand in effigy, while two hundred thousand Jews went ultimately into exile in Central

Europe, Asia, and Africa, settling chiefly in Poland and Turkey, which were then hospitable to them, and also in Holland, Brazil, and the West Indies, whence a small band appeared as suppliants at New Amsterdam in 1654, and received the privilege of entry from Peter Stuyvesant on condition that they would take care of their poor.

There were occasional pauses, however, when they enjoyed a large measure of happiness and security. Behind the Ghetto gates their homes were altars, their domestic lives pure, their schools vigorously upheld, and their synagogues formed a sovereignty of their own. Forgetting the shameless indignities practised on them, they wrote and taught, worked and planned, and numbered their poets and scholars even in troublous times. Their buoyancy was irresistible—heart and brain were kept fresh and strong by study and aspiration. They were physicians, too, to Court and Church; and if no other profession was open to them, often as financial agents they controlled the sinews of war and rendered service to the state. They were not always prudent, it must be confessed, and an occasional tendency to osten-

tation aroused public odium, while legend exaggerated their wealth until the mob thought it a duty to despoil them in an era of dangerous popular superstition. As kings and prelates were often greatly indebted to the Jews, the easiest way to settle accounts was to excite the mob against them and thus destroy all evidences of indebtedness.

Apart from occasional popular outbreaks, often checked by friendly prince or bishop, Ghetto existence was uneventful. The synagogue was the centre of communal life, the Sabbath and festivals were joyously celebrated. The Jew believed that his trials were divinely ordained and for a wise purpose; while hope in a Messiah was so vivid that now and then pseudo-Messiahs were welcomed and caused excitement in Europe and the East, even if their claims failed of realisation. Often when news reached the Ghetto of the appearance of such an impostor, many Jews would sell their goods to secure funds to journey to Palestine to meet the deliverer, so naïve was their faith. And yet this was centuries before the Millerite excitement in New England and the appearance of Dowie, the so-called prophet, in Chicago.

The Jews were always more or less influenced by their environment, however inflexible their conservatism. Like their contemporaries, they had their heresies and heretics, but in modest fashion. Thus the Karaites in the eighth century represented marked dissent from the parent stock, while the Hasidim or the pietists of Poland, who sprang into existence in the latter part of the eighteenth century, met hostile treatment from the rabbis of the traditional school. The rise of the Cabala is another illustration of Jewish intellectual fertility, while Moses Mendelssohn (1740–93) is regarded as beginning the movement towards emancipation from within, which kept pace with civic emancipation in the states of Europe. Varieties of conservative and reformer, radical and Zionist of different degrees of intensity, are found to-day in Jewry,—the conflict of opinion dates from the Talmudic age, when parties and partisans debated hotly in the schools of Palestine and Babylonia. The Jew was never mentally dormant; he preferred aberration to torpor.

The proscriptive measures of State and Church from the early centuries had prac-

tically the aim in view attributed to a distinguished Russian official who recently died, but not at the hands of an assassin. It was to drive a third of the Jews to death, a third to exile, and a third to the Church. It is possible that this computation is correct, although there are no exact statistics to confirm it. Doubtless many Jews sought security by conversion, while intermarriage had its natural effect in withdrawals from Judaism. Jewish and princely blood have often commingled, especially in Spain. No more thrilling chapter is found in Jewish history than that which records the fate of the Maranos of Spain and Portugal, the majority of whom publicly professed Christianity and yet remained Jews in private. Against them the mob was embittered more than against their former brethren, and unutterably cruel were the sufferings they had to undergo. Hundreds, nay thousands, met death at the stake rather than renounce in reality their olden faith; while as emigrants, like the Huguenots, they added to the wealth of their adopted country and became leaders in varied lines—finance, literature, art, and statecraft.

The history of the Jews has not ended; it is bound up with the history of civilisation. Judging, however, by the spirit of Israel's past, his reverence for his Book and its traditions, as well as his love for country and humanity, breadth of view and mental alertness, he can anticipate the future with every confidence. The world is advancing in reality and the tribunal of The Hague dimly points to an era of human brotherhood, when the Jewish prophet's vision of universal peace shall be realised.

CHAPTER VIII

WHAT IS JEWISH LITERATURE?

IF you should ask the average man or woman, What is Jewish literature? you would receive, probably, the one answer, It is the Old Testament; and perhaps there would be a further reply, It is the Hebrew prayer-book. That it is a fairly comprehensive term, which includes the rise and development of a vast, all-embracing literature, extending over two or three thousand years, on every conceivable topic, and touched by the spirit of each century, the varied currents of changing civilisations, is a view of the subject which might arouse defiant doubt. And yet it is the truth, without a shred of romance or exaggeration.

The reason for such skepticism is not far to seek. It is largely due to the fact that all literatures but Jewish are studied in the schools. Jewish literature remains an

unknown realm, and what the rabbis thought and wrote, what the sages in all epochs planned and accomplished, are regarded as antiquarian—material for your literary fossil, or dry as dust, but not for the rest of us. Some people have a vague idea that the rabbis were mere pedants and theologians and that their work is utterly out of touch with the present age, as much as the curious messages which cuneiform tablets bear from buried cities of primitive times.

There could be no greater error. Theology is by no means the only note in Jewish literature, which includes ethics, history, folk-lore, science,—medical, physical, mathematical,—poetry, philosophy, with plentiful humour to relieve soberness and pathos. Such was the buoyancy of the rabbis, such their receptiveness and plastic character, despite a natural conservative bias, that their literature clearly reflects the movements of every age, of whose culture and progress they were far from being passive spectators. And just as their constant migrations over so long a period insured their physical vitality, as they overcame obstacles and unfavourable conditions, so their continuous contact with

new epochs of culture, now in Persia, now Arabia, now Spain, now Central Europe, here in Italy and there in Poland: whether it was the Renaissance or the Reformation, the age of feudalism or the age of steam, this continuity of impressions and influences gave freshness and vigour to their intellects. Their view-point had to be broadened, if unconsciously, and if the rabbis in a measure influenced their times, they were no less unconsciously influenced in turn. The exchange was well maintained.

What, then, is Jewish literature? What are its distinctive elements and epochs? There is but little to help the general reader to form an opinion. Let us compare it to a building of imposing proportions. Its foundation is the Old Testament; upon that, undoubtedly, the entire structure is reared, although the subject-matter from story to story is exceedingly varied, and includes all lines of thought. The study of the Hebrew Law and Prophets, so intimately connected with the life and institutions of the people, gave rise to the beginnings of a literature out of which was evolved the earliest rabbinical era, after the return from Babylonian cap-

tivity under Ezra. It was the era of the scribes, who, with their successors, strove to compete with changes in language and condition, and sought to preserve the Jew's solidarity by increased study of the law and the traditions in all their minute ramifications. So with the gradual dawn of Roman supremacy, there ensued a closer interpretation of doctrine and usage. Thus arose the Mishna, which was a code of decisions embodying the oral law, and later its complement or commentary, the Gemara, which together formed the Talmud, as the schools of the rabbis spread in Palestine and Babylonia and the need of an authoritative codex became more and more felt in the centuries after Jerusalem's fall. The Talmud is essentially a legal code, a digest, a concise compilation of debates and discussions, in which the traditional rule is illustrated from many diverse points of view. The work contains, besides abstract law principles, legends in abundance, philosophy, history, archæology, medicine, hygiene, and the rest, with light and shade peculiar to such a collection which is no man's creation, but that of hundreds of sages stretching over seven hundred years.

A colossal literature has been developed from the Talmud, to which additions are steadily made in different languages.

A second phase of Jewish literature began just as foreign influences were producing a new epoch in Palestine, and for several centuries developed as the Jewish Hellenic. Springing from the Greek translation of the Old Testament—the Septuagint—Alexandria formed the centre of Jewish intellectual life, and men like Philo, Aristeas, Aristobulus, Ezekielos, Eupolemos, philosophers, dramatists, historians, illustrated the versatility of the Jewish brain when wrestling with new conditions and Greek culture.

Side by side with the literature of the Talmud there developed the literature of the Midrash, vast in extent and distinctive in character. This was homiletic in style, and proves the early familiarity of the rabbis with the art of preaching. Extending over practically the entire Old Testament, the Midrash is part parable, part ethics, now revealing exquisite poetical beauty and now deep philosophical insight. It is commentary and illustration, often fantastic and strained, yet the wildest hyperbole can be made to yield

some positive truth. That, in centuries of national disaster and unsettled political conditions, the rabbis could have produced such marvellous material, is a proof at least of their versatility. The compilations of these Midrashim date from about 700, not long after the Talmud had reached its close.

A new epoch was now to arise—that of the Spanish-Arabic, exactly as ages before the Greek era had spurred on Jewish thought. With avidity the Jews seized hold of Arabic culture and did their share as intermediaries between the learning of the Orient and the Occident. A host of scholars in varied lines—theology, ethics, history, law, medicine, exegesis, astronomy, etc.—now arose. As Arabic became the dominant type, the Jew rapidly acquired fluency in his new vernacular. A particularly important branch of Jewish-Arabic literature is that of philosophy, works of permanent value being produced. When Spain became the seat of Arabic civilisation, a golden age of Jewish literature developed—with names like Gabirol, Judah Hallevi, Moses ibn Ezra, and Alcharisi. If the models in most cases were Arabic, the spirit was Jewish to the core, and their poems

have become classic. The themes were not always religious—satire, romance, and fable formed the subject-matter of many productions. Santob de Carrion and Suskind von Trimberg were Spanish songster and German minnesinger respectively, while Immanuel ben Solomon of Rome, Dante's friend, wrote a Hebrew travesty of the *Divina Commedia*. Of the philosophic intellects of this period, Maimonides is the chief. His *Guide to the Perplexed* had its influence on Spinoza, while mediæval scholasticism must acknowledge its debt to Jewish thinkers. In the same period was a long list of famous biblical interpreters, like Rashi in France, and Abraham ibn Ezra in Spain.

A further branch of Jewish literature in this era was devoted to chronicles and travels. The writers were not always veracious, it must be confessed, but some are sufficiently authentic for their purpose, and none was as unreliable as Sir John Mandeville. Of these authors, the name of Benjamin of Tudela is, perhaps, the best known to the general reader. Often amid scenes of bloodshed they penned their records, while their travels were undergone with

pathetic uncertainty, which made impossible any great literary charm.

With the close of the fifteenth century, when the Spanish-Arabic period ended in exile and death for the Jews of Spain, an epoch of decline followed, relieved here and there by names of eminence, but lasting for fully three centuries. The art of printing, the dawn of Humanism, and the Reformation, were full of significance for Jewish literature, while the speculations of the Cabala fascinated many Jewish thinkers. One literary work of general interest has come down to us from this era—Penini's *Contemplation of the World* which received, in German translation, praise from Lessing and Goethe. Further writers worthy of mention were Crescas and Albo, philosophers; Isaac Abarbanel, biblical commentator; Abraham Zacuto, literary historian and astronomer; Nagara, the versatile poet, to name only a few. Italy became prominent in Hebrew learning, with Elias Levita and Elias del Medigo among the leaders, while Joseph Cohen writes *The Vale of Weeping*, a chronicle of troublous times, and Deborah Ascarelli and Sara Copia Sullam head the

list of literary Jewesses. Other Italian Jewish writers are Azariah de Rossi, whose researches are still of value; Leo de Modena, and Azariah Figo, whose sermons are models in their way; and Moses Chaim Luzzatto, who imitated in Hebrew Guarini's pastorals and became a hapless mystic. His Hebrew poems and dramas are classic and show how flexible a language is Hebrew when genius wields the pen.

Other names, probably of less interest, could be mentioned of scholars in Poland, in Holland (with Spinoza and Manasseh ben Israel), and in Germany, from the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. It remains to glance briefly at the latest though not the last period in Jewish literature, from the era of Mendelssohn in Germany, towards the end of the eighteenth century, to our time. Apart from a revival of Hebrew literature, which was long maintained, the new period opened with a German translation of the Old Testament—ushering in a renaissance in the world of German thought for the Jew. Zunz, Rapoport, Graetz, Frankel, Geiger, Steinschneider, are names of international fame, who have justified the

claims of Jewish literature, history, and research to the attention of scholars. A brilliant era followed, with illustrious writers in different lines—poetry, philosophy, history, romance, science, journalism; and the productions of authors like Mosenthal, L. A. Frankl, L. Kompert, K. E. Franzos, and A. Bernstein have attained permanent value. Nor must Heine be omitted from the list, while Berthold Auerbach, Max Ring, Moritz Lazarus, and H. Steinthal are to be added.

A notable development of Jewish literature was witnessed in Russia, where a school of writers arose in the early part of the nineteenth century. These made Hebrew the vehicle of their prose and verse. Günzburg, A. B. and M. J. Lebensohn, Kalman Schulman, Abraham Mapu (who created the Hebrew novel), Leon Gordon, with journalists like S. J. Fuenn, Slonimsky, and Zederbaum, and a long list of younger men, have shown the adaptability of Hebrew as the language of poetic and philosophic thought, science, the novel, and the newspaper. Among noted works that have been translated into Hebrew are *The Mysteries of*

Paris, plays of Shakespeare, poems of Schiller and Goethe, and choice productions from Longfellow, Mark Twain, Zola, and De Maupassant.

Thus Jewish literature is universal in scope and extent. From the scribes, through the sages of the Talmud, from the Hellenistic authors to the scholars of the Babylonian academies, from the writers who shone in the Arabic-Spanish period to the poets and thinkers of Italy and the East, to the dawn and development of the modern epoch which has witnessed such a remarkable renaissance in Europe, Jewish literature is well worthy of study, if only in outline. It adopts all languages—Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, Rabbinic, Arabic, Spanish, Italian, every modern tongue. It is so catholic as to be found even in popular jargons, and has reached a special development in Yiddish. It echoes not only the feelings of Israel, but the inspirations of humanity. It has caught the tones of all races and climes for several thousand years and has the elements of perpetual youth. Why, then, should it not be given some attention in our colleges and seminaries?

CHAPTER IX

IS JUDAISM NECESSARY TO-DAY?

A FEW months ago, two friends were discussing the subject of the various religions: the one a Presbyterian, a lawyer by profession; the other an Israelite, a physician of repute. In the course of the conversation the lawyer was asked his opinion of Judaism. "To tell you frankly," the reply came, without any hesitation, "I regard it as entirely unnecessary to-day. The world can get along without it. Its work ended long ago. All that is good and useful in it has been utilised by other creeds." When he was further questioned to account for its survival he rejoined: "Why, it is purely an arrested development, interesting as an archæological study, that is all. Of course, I admit that I have met very few Jews and have read little, if anything, about their religion or history."

There is nothing exceptional or exaggerated in this statement. The *Ilium fuit* argument applied to Judaism, the view that it is essentially an anachronism in the currents of these later centuries and in an atmosphere of Yankee notions, is by no means rare. If it is not more frequently expressed, possibly out of motives of delicacy, it is held none the less tenaciously. Judaism's work is closed, so it is asserted, sagely; it has no further *raison d'être.* If now and then a Jew does appear on the world's stage and competes for recognition he is as superfluous as would be an old-time Etruscan. He can tell us nothing new. And as for his religion, his rites, customs, ceremonies, his doctrines and literature, why, that is merely for the museum of antiquities along with other theological pterodactyls. This is not the Mesozoic Age—who wishes to breathe again the Judean atmosphere?

That Judaism should be regarded as unnecessary is due mainly to two special causes. The first springs from the density of popular ignorance. When Marlowe pictured Barabbas as poisoner of wells he was merely giving the popular idea of a Jew. When Shake-

speare symbolised in Shylock the spirit of revenge as the Jew's chief characteristic he was also presenting the current notion—any figure like Nathan the Wise or Daniel Deronda, if at all thinkable in that era, would have been hooted from the stage. With the ages, naturally, there has been a gratifying improvement in the popular conception, despite the cheap vaudeville and the vulgar comic weekly; but how absurd and untrue the caricature that still prevails! How can it be otherwise? Greece and Rome find a conspicuous place in the school text-book—the history of the Jew is limited to a few pages, ending with the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, when two thousand years of wandering, a record thrilling, eventful, of far-reaching consequences, receives absolutely no mention. In standard works on education Judaism is considered a negligible quantity, although long before the mediæval schoolmasters the rabbis were teachers of what in large measure might be called the new education. In pretentious volumes on the history of religions Judaism, if discussed at all, is restricted practically to the era of the Old Testament, all later developments being

omitted as without historic significance. In a recently issued work, devoted to what has been done in the United States for the year, all sects and creeds being duly chronicled, no provision was made in the schedule for American Judaism, with two million adherents, so unnecessary did it appear.

When the scholar, the theologian, the historian, who certainly should foster the broadest ideals, are satisfied with partial knowledge and unjust discrimination, what wonder that the people continue in their ignorance! The average pulpit, the teacher of the multitude, presents the Jew without flesh and blood, a mere ghostly shadow of the centuries between the Testaments, an unsubstantial echo of a far-away epoch. That popular ignorance is the favourite soil for antipathies, social and religious, cannot be disputed. Hence, when the scholar underrates or ignores Judaism as a living factor in the world's betterment, a force to be reckoned with in the history of civilisation, he is but forging a link in the chain of prejudice, with its hateful consequences. Happily, there are scholars not a few who rise above such colossal ignorance and are proud to

exclaim with Barthélemy Saint Hilaire in Senator Millaud's *Petites Pages*, "Never conquered, always erect, as courageous as it is resigned, Israel shines in the world like a torch throughout the ages."

The second contributing factor to present-day ignorance of Judaism has been the Jew himself. While not primarily responsible for the mediæval Ghetto into which he was cast like a hunted criminal, he is at fault if in lands that assure him civil and religious freedom he retains a trace of the Ghetto spirit, any aloofness or exclusiveness, any peculiarity or attitude that may single him out as an alien for which his religion and not his personal idiosyncrasies is blamed. It is possible, however, to be too exacting in this connection—it takes time to abandon habits bred by centuries of oppression. The truly representative Israelite knows how to discriminate between essentials and non-essentials in his creed and practice, and, save in the synagogue, is indistinguishable in character, motive, appearance, manner from his neighbour who goes to church. A man or woman of that type enters zealously into the life of the general community, promotes

the public welfare, is a useful citizen of the commonwealth, whose highest interest he makes his own. If he strives to advance art, music, science, education, benevolence, no question of creed is considered. His Americanism, his patriotic fervour, is a vital part of his religion. Men like Haym Salomon, who sacrificed his fortune for the American cause, in the darkest period of the Revolution, with a reckless disregard for collateral which no financier of our time would dream of imitating; or Judah Touro, who fought at New Orleans under Jackson and devoted his wealth in public and private beneficence; or Julius Hallgarten, whose large bequests went to education without regard to race, creed, and colour; not to allude to the rapidly increasing list of men and women who identify themselves with public movements without, however, neglecting the appealing cry of their needy brethren in the flesh—such examples are shining texts which rob popular prejudice of much of its sting. But many have still to discriminate between substance and shadow, reality and counterfeit, in their ancestral religion and its traditions, which have become so closely intermingled that

more than ordinary heroism is required to cut the knot. Until they have learned the lesson, and have abandoned their voluntary Ghetto, with its narrowness and conceit, they have largely to blame themselves for such ignorance and antipathy as are encountered.

Now waiving further consideration of the two factors that are mainly responsible for current notions as to Judaism, let us briefly consider what are the qualities in a religion which make it necessary to-day. Let us ignore for the moment theological claims and assumptions that are to be met in the history of all creeds and which are possibly the secret of their weakness as well as their strength. Let us give precedence rather to the positive and practical elements.

A religion must first be rational—it must appeal to the reason and not stultify human intelligence as the fundamental basis of belief. It must concern itself primarily with the lives and welfare of its adherents on earth and not dwell needlessly on the delights and terrors of another world, angelic raptures, demonic frenzies. Its ethical strength must be without a flaw—there must be no dallying

with the moral principle for self-aggrandisement. Its ultimate aim must be human betterment, not the extirpation of all who hold other views. Macaulay could not have crystallised the matter more tersely when he wrote that the doctrine of bigotry is simply this: "I am in the right and you are in the wrong. When you are the stronger you agree to tolerate me, for it is your duty to tolerate truth. But when I am the stronger I shall persecute you, for it is my duty to persecute error." A religion, finally, must make its followers better, more helpful, more blessed, so that its influence shall be recognised more and more for good.

Before we ask, How does Judaism meet this definition of a necessary religion? (within present limitations it is impossible to enter more thoroughly into the subject), let us put the question, What is Judaism? That is the crux of the discussion. It is not the religion of the Patriarchs, the Pentateuch, the Prophets only. It is ethical monotheism coloured by the history of the Jewish people, and is a development ever continuing as that people or race or religious body survives from age to age, from clime to clime. It is not

restricted to the Old Testament and the surroundings of Palestine. That environment marked only its point of origin. As the real history of the Jew may be said to have begun with the Roman's capture of Jerusalem, when he exchanged a strip of soil for the universe, so his religion, which is not Mosaism or Rabbinism, but Judaism, attained its greatest breadth when the sacrificial era closed, prayer became the substitute for burnt offering, and school and synagogue spread in every land. Ideals change, customs vary, opinions clash, and out of this everlasting conflict Judaism attains new life and vigour. That is one secret of its survival. The very legalism which is such a constituent part of the Jewish religion, and which is usually criticised as repressive and narrowing, became a balance-wheel for character and conduct.

Naturally, this view will be sharply challenged by those who have made Judaism a convenient dummy or veritable taboo. There are many who conscientiously limit the religion of the Jew to the Old Testament. The modern Jew, they assert, is a degenerate, his religion a counterfeit, if not a danger to the children of light. The testimony of

history, the story of rabbinical development, with the wider dispersion after the Roman triumph, the influence of the Talmud, the spread of the schools East and West, the tremendous upheaval with the discovery of America, the Reformation, the French Revolution; these have given new form and colour to the Jew's thought and made the Biblical era almost like his kindergarten. Such a view of the situation is utterly ignored by those who have long preached Judaism's funeral sermon and cannot understand why its obsequies are indefinitely postponed. Everything is ready but the corpse.

Bearing in mind, then, this juster conception of Judaism as embracing every era in its history, past and present, how far does it meet our definition of a necessary religion?

Judaism is rational, for its fundamental doctrines are in accord with human intelligence. These are the unity of God and the unity of mankind, which forms a common brotherhood, even as the Deity is the Father of all races and creeds. Its ideal is universal peace and righteousness, to be brought about by the gradual diffusion of justice, kindness, and humility. Its aim is the attainment of

the perfect life among its adherents, which its rites and ceremonies have in view and to which they are subordinated. Its ethics are unsurpassed for breadth and beauty—they have become so absorbed and utilised that the world fails to recognise the debt. It plants itself on earth and speculates little about the next world, preferring to make a heaven of earth instead of transplanting the passions and weaknesses of earth to heaven. Its highest conception of the future is of all creeds and nations acknowledging one God and worshipping as brethren. It seeks no proselytes: all who lead pious lives, whatever their creed or race, inherit eternal bliss, is its traditional saying. And it has held to this gracious optimism despite two thousand years of travail. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," "Have we not all one Father?" are its golden texts for all time.

Undoubtedly one clew, however slight, to the opinion that Judaism is unnecessary, is found in its disinclination to proselytise. One is accustomed to associate some system of propaganda, an active, aggressive tendency, with a living faith. Apparently the objection that Max Müller decades ago uttered against

Judaism as being inert without the missionary spirit carries a certain amount of weight. Hence, as it makes no outside stir, is concerned directly with its own adherents, and gives no thought to the world's salvation as demanding its interference, it is likely to be regarded as less necessary than a more militant organisation. But there is a two-fold reason for this apathy. In the first place, the Jews have never had the power to make propaganda even if they desired and the synagogue polity favoured such a course. It would have been suicidal, if one considers the conditions under which they have existed. Then, too, the Jew, realising the beauty and excellence in the life and aspiration of the non-Jew, feels that the offshoots of Judaism, what the Germans call its "daughter religions," are doing God's work. As a matter of history, however, it is false to assume that Judaism has always been a passionless block—it has numbered illustrious converts; but these have come without conscious effort, even in Roman days when Juvenal grew sarcastic at the Jew's expense and the synagogue was visited by men and women of noble rank. Why, however, should

it compass sea and earth to make a proselyte? What was to be gained? Mere numerical strength was of little consequence to a people whose consoling hope was the saving remnant. And as for power, dominion, wealth, had not the prophet proclaimed of old, "Not by might, but by my spirit"?

It is, however, the survival of Judaism, with its essential belief still powerful, its hold on its adherents practically unchanged, its ethical platform broad and inspiring, in other words, its vitality undimmed, that proves its right to be called a religion necessary to-day. When Tennyson wrote,

> "From scarped cliff and quarried stone
> She cries, 'A thousand types are gone:
> I care for nothing, all shall go,'"

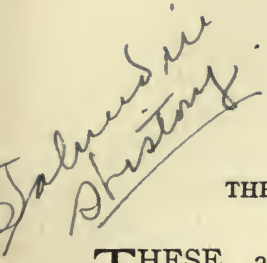
he did not think of any possible exception to the law of destruction that overwhelms nations and creeds as well as cliff and stone. May not Judaism, without any undue boastfulness, claim to be such an exception? A religion that has survived so much cannot be unnecessary. A vitality that has stood, persecution-proof, for ages must have a further part to play. If the thought of

Emerson be true, "Every lash inflicted is a tongue of flame, every prison a more illustrious abode, every burnt book or house enlightens the world," the practical crucifixion of an entire race for nearly twenty centuries because it refused to be disloyal to its flag is the most powerful proof that it must possess a message and a warning necessary in some form for mankind to-day.

Judaism has had the hardest kind of a fight from the beginning. It has had to uplift itself from idolatry and materialism. Its entire history has been a discipline of suffering—a process of chastening. But it has caught some share of the truth and it is needed to emphasise that portion. If it has not realised its ideals, is not this the fate of humanity in general? Yet the mind and heart of the race have been so trained in the school of trial, its intellect so exercised, when any other people would have fallen in the mire and been lost by the way, that there is not a field to which it has been grudgingly admitted which its representatives have not adorned. Art, music, science, law, medicine, finance, philology, the useful trades, philanthropy, has not the Jew's record in these

departments of effort been notable in but a single century of emancipation? Surely a religion that can produce such illustrious workers from Josef Israels to Moses Montefiore cannot but be necessary to-day. And as to the future, it will be more necessary as the world's attitude changes and the Jew himself wisely and reverently can give more thought to the changeless spirit and ideals of Judaism than to transient forms, symbols, and customs, which, while they may protect and preserve vital principles too often obscure, distort and stifle the truth.

Talmud in History



CHAPTER X

THE TALMUD IN HISTORY

THESE are days when from buried mound and hidden rock the distant past is steadily revealing its secrets, and the history of once powerful, but now extinct, nations is successfully deciphered. The cultured lands of our time are interested in the quest and send their scholars to speed research. Thus Egypt, Babylonia, Assyria, Persia are reconstructed from the library and the museum of antiquities.

While the literature of nations that have passed away is again read and studied with an ease that grows with every fresh discovery, one old book remains as mysterious and indecipherable as the Sphinx, although subjected for over a thousand years to the merciless assaults of foes and rapt adoration of worshippers. One by one the sacred books of the East are brought to the attention of the

cultured of every creed and interpreted by modern scholarship. This book,—this series of volumes rather, the date of whose authorship and composition extends over seven hundred years—the Talmud, preserves its remoteness and maintains its air of solitude. It defies the critic, it baffles the investigator, it allures, yet eludes, the student. Its age, its language, its contents, its atmosphere, its character, render useless the ordinary tools of literary analysis and interpretation; and its mountains of dialectic and discussion are practically insurmountable. Here and there, it is true, the process of decipherment has begun. A few trusty explorers have been at work, and many a gem has been brought to light, with outlines of dim, subterranean palaces of thought. But although the study of the Talmud as a modern discipline, and its elucidation in the light of the latest historical and philological researches, have made some progress, the Talmud remains the Talmud. We may abridge, translate, paraphrase, as has already been done in French, German, and English; we may publish introductions and gather a thousand extracts—the Talmud is a sealed work save

to the initiated, the genuine Talmudist, who has devoted long stretches of his youth and manhood to its earnest and all-engrossing study. The dilettante may scale its outer wall, but can never gain the inner citadel.

The story of the Talmud, the rise and development of Jewish tradition, the codification of the laws and sayings of the rabbis—with their twin-streams of *halakah* or abstract principle and *haggadah* or parable—this has been told at greater or less length in recent decades; and how it became the intellectual Temple of the Jew when the Temple at Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans, need not be repeated here. But the Talmud in history, not the history of the Talmud, is a less familiar topic, and one which has a fascination of its own. What has been its fate in the centuries? Has it shared the varying fortunes of the Jewish people? Has it been raised to a pedestal or fastened to a stake? Has it, too, aroused calumny, suffering, torture? Many are the instances in history when rude hands have been laid on a book to destroy it. It might have been a version of Scripture, a scientific treatise, a whole library which must be burnt to satisfy

the adversary's wrath or piety. Such examples of "slaying an immortality rather than a life," belong to all ages and creeds. The peculiarity of the Talmud's fate, however, is the continuous persecution which it has encountered—as if principalities and powers wished to expiate their own transgressions on this literary scapegoat, this enigmatical work, "without form or comeliness," and despised as cunning sorcery that led men to perdition. Thou art not a book, one of its mediæval critics all but exclaims; thou art a rabbi. Beware of the spell!

While earlier centuries show a scattering fire of fulminations against the Talmud and its study from the era of Justinian, the Middle Ages are richest in such incidents that illustrate the temper of the times. France furnishes the first chapter in the mediæval record of the Talmud's fate. In the thirteenth century, the French rabbis, with more courage than prudence, excommunicated Nicholas Donin. Rabbis are human after all, and learn sometimes too well from their neighbours. They are more impressionable than is generally believed, and can be taught readily by their surroundings. The quality

of imitativeness has usually been a costly one to the Jew. In the case of Donin, they simply adopted the mediæval method of silencing heresy; the result was distinctly disagreeable.

To avenge their judgment on his opinions, he became a convert; and, quick to convince his new brethren of his zeal, he assailed the Talmud before Pope Gregory IX and St. Louis of France. He accused it of blasphemy and abuse of the Christian religion, in a long list of charges to which the Pope gave willing ear. A transcript was promptly sent by Gregory to the heads of the Church in various lands, and a letter was written to the monarchs of these countries, to demand their support. Apparently, there was more rattle than fang in papal decrees in that era, for only in France was the Talmud really confiscated. In 1240 the Jews were compelled by law to surrender their copies, and the work was put on trial. A public disputation was held, and four prominent rabbis of North France were summoned to appear each in turn, and refute, if possible, Donin's charges. The scene took place at the royal court on June 25, 1240, in the presence of the Queen-mother Blanche, the Bishops of Paris and

Senlis, and of many Dominicans. After a three days' discussion in Latin, the Talmud was ordered to be burnt. For a time the sentence was not executed, owing to the intercession of the Archbishop of Sens. On his sudden death, however, copies of the Talmud and similar writings were seized by order of Louis, and twenty-four carloads of them were burnt in Paris in June, 1242. Gregory's successor, Innocent IV, in 1243, promptly rescinded the edict of destruction. This burning of the Talmud was not forgotten by the Jews. The anniversary was kept as a fast, and elegies were written on the event.

The disputation at Paris was not without influence on other lands. On July 20, 1263, Barcelona witnessed a similar trial which lasted four days. Here there were only two disputants—Nachmanides, the most famous rabbi in Spain, and Pablo Christiani, a converted Jew of the Dominican order. Both were men of controversial ability, and the tournament possessed more intellectual merit than its predecessor. After protracted parleying on both sides, Nachmanides won warm praise from the King of Aragon for his skilful defence. The Dominicans sought to

renew the discussion a week later in the synagogue, but here they had such little success that, when Nachmanides left Barcelona, the King gave him 300 maravedis as a token of respect.

The Talmud was not to enjoy any long respite from attack. A year later, in 1264, at the request of Pablo Christiani, Pope Clement IX issued a bull to the Bishop of Taragona, commanding him to confiscate copies of the Talmud, and submit them to the Dominicans and Franciscans for examination, and, if found blasphemous, to be burnt. The King of Aragon having received this bull from Pablo, ordered the Talmud to be examined, and all apparently abusive and blasphemous passages to be struck out. The Dominicans, with Pablo, became thus official censors of the Talmud—which was a less radical method to employ than wholesale condemnation to the flames.

The third public trial of the Talmud was remarkable for its duration. It took place in Tortosa, Aragon, from Feb., 1413, until Nov. 12, 1414. Sixty-eight sessions were held, certainly sufficient in number to exhaust the subject and the spectators. A

Jewish convert again appeared as accuser, Geronimo de Santa Fé. In defence of the Talmud, over twenty of the most prominent Aragonese Jews were summoned to appear, including poets, physicians, philosophers, translators; but none had the courage and capacity of Nachmanides. Perhaps they felt the uselessness of further vindication, and realised how insecure their right of domicile in the shadow of the Inquisition. Pope Benedict XIII, who had been deposed from the papacy, but retained the mask of authority in Spain, presided at the disputation, and sought to regain his power and prestige by the conversion of the Jews, which was to follow their abandonment of the Talmud. For a time the discussion was calm and friendly; but when Benedict found that his hopes were vain, and the Jews continued in their obstinacy, threat followed cajolery, and he threw aside all dissimulation. He condemned the Talmud to the flames, and prohibited its further study; but his decree had no effect. His bull of eleven clauses, issued May 11, 1415, never came into active operation; for while he was engaged in his vindictive measures the Council of Constance

deposed him. Not only was he abandoned by his Spanish protectors, and his mere shadow of authority ridiculed, but he was denounced as "unfrocked and spurious" by his favourite, the flagellant priest, Vincent Ferrer, who had so powerfully aided him in his plans against the Talmud.

For a century the Talmud was allowed a brief spell of repose, and then it became once more the cause of an agitation which was to be wider reaching than its foes and friends ever imagined to be possible. When, in the beginning of the sixteenth century, Pfefferkorn, a Jewish convert, who had been imprisoned for theft, sought to destroy the Talmud, he would have hesitated and abandoned his plan if he had for a moment thought that his hue and cry was to influence the Protestant Reformation, and pave the way for a Hebrew renaissance. Pfefferkorn, with a coterie of Dominicans of Cologne, prevailed upon the sister of Emperor Maximilian, who after her husband's death entered a convent at Munich and became abbess, to further their designs.

On Aug. 19, 1509, Maximilian gave Pfefferkorn full power over the Talmud and

kindred books. Frankfort was the first scene of conflict, when the censor demanded the surrender of the Talmud and other works at the Emperor's request. But the Jews of that city were not to submit so readily as their brethren in Spain and France. They appealed to the Archbishop of Mayence, and checked temporarily the Dominicans. How Reuchlin, the head of the Humanists, was drawn into the strife, to decide as to the character of the Talmud; how, despite the Emperor's vacillation, the Talmud was vindicated; how Hoogstraten and the Dominicans were lampooned by Hutten and the author of *Epistolae Obscurorum Virorum;* how, one by one, the cause of the Talmud gained new adherents, including Erasmus and Franz von Sickingen; how the universities were appealed to for their opinion, and the University of Paris condemned the Talmud; how, finally, the subject was brought before the Lateran Council, and the Dominicans were compelled to pay the costs of their suit against Reuchlin, while Pope Leo X permitted the Talmud to be printed by Daniel Bomberg at Venice;—all this belongs to the history of Humanism, and

forms a fascinating chapter in the story of intellectual progress. It was not accidental that in the very year of the *editio princeps* of the Talmud, 1520, Luther at Wittenberg burnt the Pope's bull.

The Talmud's triumph was to receive a temporary check. While the printing presses were beginning to supply large orders for the work, and interest in Hebrew and rabbinical literature had received marked development, Pope Julius III signed the decree laid before him by the Inquisitor-General, Aug. 12, 1553, condemning to confiscation and the flames throughout Italy copies of the Talmud and Hebrew books. Pope Paul IV continued in this hostile spirit, and gave the Talmud no mercy. Under his successor, Pius IV, the harsh laws of his immediate predecessors were somewhat modified. He issued a bull (March 24, 1564), as the decision of the Council of Trent, that while the Talmud was a prohibited work, it could be printed if its name were omitted, and if it were submitted before publication to the censor, for the omission of any inimical references to the Church and the Christian religion. The mutilation of the Talmud, the various expurgations and

new readings instituted by papal commissions—this forms an interesting chapter in itself. Gross ignorance and prejudice revel here at their worst, and originate laughable emendations. That the word "heathen" can now refer to a non-Christian, that the Rome of the Talmud was not the Rome of the papacy, apparently did not dawn upon the learned inquisitors; and the verbal changes in consequence that are preserved in extant editions would surprise indeed the olden rabbis.

There followed now a brighter era for the Talmud. The revival in Hebrew and rabbinical learning made triumphant progress. In Holland, England, and Switzerland, Talmudic studies attracted a host of scholars. The Buxtorfs, L'Empereur, Sheringam, Selden, Surenhuys, were among the men who strove to popularise rabbinical lore; and they were to be succeeded by other illustrious names in the learned world down to our own day—translators and interpreters in varied fashion. It is true there were attempts now and then to subject the Talmud to reproach and condemnation, and as recently as 1757 a large number of copies of the work were

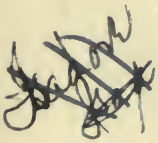
burnt in Poland to satisfy the cravings of fanaticism. The anti-Semitic wave which has about spent its force in Germany was marked, too, by the revival of old-time accusations. But the spirit of our age is not the spirit of mediævalism. When Franz Delitzsch can write in vindication of the Talmud; when August Wünsche can devote years to the translation of its *haggadah*, and the fairy-land of rabbinical *midrash;* when W. H. Lowe, one of a number of Christian scholars in England, can exclaim, in editing a fragment of the Talmud: "The Talmud is a closed book to those who are content to skim the scum which rises to the surface of its troubled water. Closed, doubly closed, is it to those who come with a blind hatred of Judaism, and whose chief delight it is to cry, 'Impious Jew! foolish rabbi!' "—when its importance for philology, archæology, and the elucidation of problems of the early centuries, has become recognised—and Pope Clement's proposal, in 1307, to found Talmudical chairs at the universities has been adopted in more than one instance in Europe and America—might not one assume that history has now a kindlier and juster fate

for the maligned, misinterpreted, misunderstood Talmud?

But surely it is no spotless work, the intelligent reader may assert. Has it not blemishes, does it not contain errors, frivolities, statements that are at variance with its claims to wisdom? Yes, there are blemishes in the Talmud—that repository of rabbinical opinion, grave and gay, stretching over seven centuries. How could it be otherwise under the circumstances, seeing that the work records the mood and temper of a thousand minds, their after-dinner talk as well as judicial decisions, philosophy, folklore, and theosophy. Every varying breath, every tone, discordant or harmonious, is distinctly phonographed. It preserves too faithfully each utterance, but it gives no hint as to background and motive: this must be read between the lines. Its hyperboles and orientalisms seem ugly distortions or shameless perversions to our cooler temperaments—some topics and allusions incongruous, if not offensive. This is frankly admitted by so staunch a Jewish historian as Graetz. But a thought from Browning—who liked to cull texts from rabbinical fancy—will

perhaps best express a fair estimate of the Talmud, although the English poet never had that work in view when he penned the lines:

"It were to be wished the flaws were fewer
In the earthen vessel, holding treasure,
Which lies as safe in a golden ewer;
But the main thing is, does it hold good measure?
Heaven soon sets right all other matters."



CHAPTER XI

WHAT IS THE CABALA?

THE fact that many technical terms in Freemasonry, largely used in the higher degrees of the Scottish Rite, phrases like Sephiroth, the Seal of Solomon, Shem Hamphoresh, etc., have a Cabalistic significance, makes always timely the inquiry, What is the Cabala?

The word is often repeated without any definite knowledge of its real meaning and history. A mediæval monk, to air his learning, once cited the Talmud as a person of flesh and blood—"as Rabbi Talmud says," so he went on to quote. As much violence to the Cabala is done, one fears, when it is regarded as a mysterious book with seven seals or as a specifically Jewish system of thought.

Now here an objection is to be met. Surely it must be admitted that the Cabala was

associated with the rabbis for many ages. Yes, without the shadow of a doubt. Yet that for a thousand years such a mystical theosophy should have existed side by side with so sober and practical a creed as Judaism is no rare phenomenon in the history of religion. How often do we meet Christianity and its aberrations running as parallel and occasionally intersecting lines! While, then, one must grant that the Cabala is associated with ages of receptive Jewish thought, which was never restricted to one philosophy or school of speculation, but ranged at will among the currents of every epoch, Hellenic, Roman, Persian, Mohammedan, Christian, modern, the mystic lore must never be identified with Judaism, any more than Christian Science is to be identified with Yankee notions, or Occultism—that old inheritance from India—is to be regarded as part of our present-day civilisation.

Those familiar with the record of excavation in the East understand how ruins are stratified. Fire, pillage, an earthquake, utilising a city's former site as a convenient rubbish pile, will gradually produce a succession of layers of *débris* rising one upon the

other and effectually concealing the original walls and house-lines of the town, until the pick-axe and spade reveal distinct settlements on the one mound or hill, with evidences of different ages and civilisations in dress and ornament, dwelling and tomb, weapon and utensil. Similarly the student of the Cabala recognises therein a composite, a series of stratification, so to speak. Each layer is plainly discernible. Back of all hyperbole and mysticism, Babylonia, Persia, Egypt, Greece can be distinguished, blending with Jewish and Christian ideas.

To the general reader the Cabala presents many points of absorbing interest. Its name signifies "received" tradition, and its adherents claim for it the authority of a revelation made in the remote past to a chosen few, and preserved in an unbroken chain by the select through the ages. For centuries it was apparently a silent influence, even if in the writings of much later eras a glorious antiquity was claimed with Adam, Abraham, Moses, and Solomon as its heroes. How it crystallised around certain terms in the Old Testament; how affected by the Alexandrian philosophy and the Gnostics; its connection

with the sect of the Essenes of such significance in early Apostolic times; its frequent appearance in apocryphal writings of the second and first pre-Christian centuries; the late date and authorship of its two canonical works; its renaissance in the Middle Ages when Pico Mirandola became its champion to Christian Europe and Reuchlin zealously interpreted its secrets to the learned world—these and similar topics furnish an almost endless discussion of views. Whatever the varieties of opinion, we know now authoritatively that Egyptian, Chaldean, Greek, Jewish, and Christian culture contributed to its growth, and its history in certain developments is but a chapter in the story of those persistent survivals of intellectual aberration that meet the inquirer everywhere, and which, to apply Goethe's words, are transmitted from age to age like an everlasting ailment.

Now if the Cabala had held to its original meaning or office and remained a theoretical system of speculation, however daring, but of profound ethical worth, as its sages spun their problems of the primal will, providence, immortality, and sin, it would be less open to

criticism. It would have formed for all time a healthy antidote to rationalism. Its fundamental errors, however, were twofold: First, it canonised mysticism—a distinct point of departure from Judaism, which insists upon knowledge as the basis of faith, whose Bible is an open book, and whose Talmud records not absolutism but a conflict of opinion. But the Cabala emphasises as its *raison d'être* a mysterious esoteric revelation given to a few and restricted to a few. Could there be a greater contrast to the universalism of Scripture, its simplicity and directness? The opposition was to go much further. The saint of the early centuries was to claim by virtue of the mystic science the place of Biblical Prophet, just as in later ages his successor would create a new Bible in the Zohar.

The second vital error was when the mystics left the realm of pure abstraction and became working or practical Cabalists. The Jewish code absolutely forbade its adherents to consult the soothsayer; the Cabala too often converted the sage into the necromancer and raised demonology to a science. The cleavage grew complete, for

while Judaism taught the magic of the law, the working Cabala emphasised the law of magic, with all its noxious influences. The Hebrew letters were henceforth not merely signs for things but "implements of divine powers by means of which nature may be subjugated." Nothing, then, could be more un-Jewish than this phase of the Cabala.

We may readily decipher its varied elements. It is in reality a composite, partly ethical and partly metaphysical. Primitive Jewish fancies, stirred into activity by the period of exile and contact with foreign influences, were to develop into apocalyptic rhapsodies. Under the impetus of the Gnostics, dualism was to assert itself, which goes back to Chaldea. The Cabalistic tree, with its right side the source of light and purity and the left the source of darkness and impurity, could not be more Zoroastrian. Its visions and miracles, its doctrine of emanations, are distinctly Alexandrian, dating from an era when Alexandria and the Neo-Platonists wielded so powerful an influence. Its doctrine of numbers and letters recalls Pythagoras. Its angelology and demonology are Babylonian; its Adam Kadmon is

unquestionably Christian, with the idea of Mediator, Metatron, Prince of the world. Could any blend be more complete? Here are Moses, Zoroaster, Plato, Philo, Pythagoras, Paul, with now and then a later rabbi or schoolman in the mystic's rôle, while Pantheism, Dualism, Neo-Platonism, Idealism, the Unitarian, the Trinitarian, the Transcendentalist contend for the mastery; and in some developments the crassest materialism, like Mephisto in the shadow of the sanctuary, is present at the feast. While the Cabala may not have originated the evils associated with its name, it gave them too ready a reception and approval, to judge from the writings of many of its followers.

One essential point remains to be considered—what does the Cabala teach? It is impossible in a few paragraphs to do justice to a system so venerable and comprehensive, which from its Oriental quality and symbolism is so easily misjudged by our calmer and more critical Western minds.

It may be stated briefly to be an attempt to harmonise universal reason with the Scriptures. Its conception of the Almighty, however, is so transcendental that it is obliged

to invoke mediating influences between the Infinite and the World. Its canonical books are two, which serve as a basis for an exceedingly rich literature, stretching over a thousand years and more. The first, "Sefer Yetzirah" or "Book of Creation," is of unknown authorship and dates from about the eighth century of our era. It is a philosophical treatise on the cosmogony, and finds in the ten numbers and the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet the elements of all things and the modifications of human life. The ten Sephiroth, which can be rendered numbers, powers, intelligences, are the foundation of the entire universe, mediating between the Infinite and the World. These comprehend three primal emanations from the spirit of the Infinite. The first is spirit or air, out of which came water, to become in turn fire. Add to the three six dimensions, three to right and three to left, and the tenth element, the Spirit of God, and we have the ten eternal powers that create the substance of the universe. The Hebrew letters constitute the form, being on the boundary line between the spiritual and physical world, as only through language can be recognised

the existence of things. The letters are divided into three classes. The first forms three fundamental letters, the three primal elements water, air, and fire; the second class consists of the seven double letters which represent contrasts, and correspond with the seven planets, seven heavens, and seven earths, seven days and seven nights; the third class consists of the twelve simple letters, according to the twelve signs of the Zodiac, the twelve months of the year, the most prominent parts of the human body, and the most characteristic qualities of our nature. This description gives but an imperfect view of a treatise which, attacking the dualism of heathen philosophy, reduced the universe to the sway of one absolute Creator, working with the aid of elements springing always from some higher manifestation until the highest was reached in the Infinite.

The second work is the "Zohar" ("Splendor"), whose author is now known to be Moses ben Shemtob de Leon, who lived in the second half of the thirteenth century in Spain. A loosely constructed commentary on the Pentateuch, it forms a varied theosophy addressed to the initiated that has

secured wide attention. It has developed from a system of metaphysics into that of dogma, worship, and ethics, while among the subjects discussed are God, the world, the Messiah, revelation, sin, atonement, etc. The "Zohar" teaches God to be unknowable, as the Infinite, designated as En-Sof (without end). As the finite appears existent only through the light of the Infinite, the view was held that by the contraction of the Divine light the visible world was formed in a series of emanations (Sephiroth), the first being the uncreated eternal Will. As the creation separated itself from the Infinite, deterioration took place and evil was produced. The conflict between good and evil is no blind chance but conscious activity. The end of evil is brought about by mercy and goodness, depending upon the superiority of the spirit of man over his desires. The Messiah will appear when the mind of man ceases to be in disharmony. Then the world will be restored to perfection, and Samael, the head of the demons of darkness, will be vanquished.

Intermingled are other doctrines or views. The Infinite first revealed himself in his son, Adam Kadmon, the first man in Ezekiel's

vision, whose powers are the ten Sephiroth that encircle the throne of the Highest. These are called crown, wisdom, understanding, grace, judgment, beauty, strength, splendour, foundation, kingdom. Man is more than body, he has a threefold soul—animal, moral, and intellectual. After the death of a righteous man, the intellectual soul ascends to the Infinite, the moral enters paradise, the animal remains on earth. The soul of the sinner has to undergo penance, wandering from body to body, until it has secured perfection on earth.

The critical tendency to-day is to ascribe a higher ethical value to the Cabala, which is to be judged not from special forms or aberrations, but as an entirety and from its whole range of traditional development.

CHAPTER XII

STORIES FROM THE RABBIS

THE rabbis, whose wit and wisdom are recorded in the Talmud and Midrash, —writings that stretch over a thousand years,—were admirable story-tellers. They were fond of the parable, the anecdote, the apt illustration, and their legends that have been transmitted to us possess perennial charm. The common impression that they were rabbinical Dryasdusts, mere dreamers always buried in wearisome disputations, abstruse pedants dwelling in a world of their own, is wholly unjust. They were more than ecclesiastics,—they were men; and their cheerful humanity forms the secret to their character. Their background was rather sombre,—temple and nationality destroyed, a succession of foreign taskmasters, a series of wars and persecutions that would have annihilated any other race; but they pre-

served, none the less, a certain buoyancy and even temper, which sprang from the fulness and sunniness of their faith. They thought, and studied, and debated; they worked, and dreamt, and cherished hope,—

> "Like a poet hidden
> In the light of thought,
> Singing songs unbidden,
> Till the world is wrought
> To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not."

The rich harvest of rabbinical stories that survive can be traced to rabbinical buoyancy. It is a quality not peculiar to the rabbis; it is distinctly Oriental. Nor can absolute originality be claimed for rabbinical legends; they are children of various climes, these floating fairy-tales, and the history of their migration is as enchanting as the stories themselves. But in Palestine and Babylonia they received a colouring that was essentially rabbinical. The rabbis were preachers *par excellence;* they lost no opportunity to point a moral. In their schools of instruction, to vary the monotony and fasten the attention of their younger disciples, they found the story the best and most convincing sermon.

Let us gather a few of these tales from

their ancient storehouse, without further preface, and present them in simple narrative form.

In a year when prices were high, a pious man gave money to a wandering beggar. His wife, a veritable Xanthippe, so upbraided him for his act of kindness that he fled from home, and spent the night—it was New Year's—in the graveyard. There in the hush and stillness of the hour, he heard the departed souls of two maidens hold converse:

"Fly with me, dear sister," said the one, "through airy space to heaven, that we may learn the fate of the coming year." "How can I leave the grave?" the other replied. "I have not been buried in garments suited for so long a flight. Go thou alone, and let me know what thou hearest."

Soon the maiden's soul returned, with the information that in the coming year the early harvest would be destroyed by hail, but the late harvest would prosper. The pious man heard their talk, and as he was a farmer he acted accordingly. In the meanwhile he and his wife were on good terms again, but he could not resist the temptation to pass the

next New Year's night in the same graveyard. Again, in the silence of the place, he heard the souls of the maidens in mysterious converse, and now their story was reversed. During the coming year the early harvest was to flourish, but the late harvest would be destroyed by a scorching wind. Again the man knew how to profit by their colloquy; and while all his neighbours complained of their bad fortune, his crops were richly blessed.

Now the man's wife possessed all the curiosity of Bluebeard's spouse. She asked her husband the secret of his good luck, and he told her. Filled with the news, she hastened to the mother of the maiden buried in such unsightly fashion, and reviled her for her conduct. Once more the New Year arrived, and again the pious man spent the night in the graveyard. But when a tremulous maiden-soul asked its companion to accompany it through space, the poor child rejoined: "Let me rest! The living have heard what we have here spoken in secret."

Of all the characters in the Talmud, Rabba bar bar Chana is gifted with the liveliest imagination. He is a Munchausen,

in his way, and the stories he tells of wonderful adventures on sea and land are of special interest. There have not been wanting commentators who recognise profound wisdom in this rabbi's hyperbole; and a good deal of ingenuity has been expended in unravelling his metaphors. In a sea-journey he saw a fish whose back was covered with sand, and grass grew thereon. In this respect the nineteenth-century sea-serpent was surpassed. He thought it was an island, and he and his friends landed upon it, lit a fire, and began to prepare a meal. But as soon as the fish felt the heat he turned over, and all the travellers would have been drowned if a passing ship had not rescued them. Another time he saw a frog equal to sixty houses in size. It was swallowed by a serpent, which, in its turn, was eaten by a fish that rested upon a tree. The same doughty rabbi sees a bird, whose head towers skywards while its legs rest in the water; and he tells unconcernedly about a huge fish, whose dead body, cast ashore by the waves, destroyed sixty cities. Sixty other cities were fed by its meat, and sixty more cities were supplied with the salted remainder.

More poetical is the rabbinical legend about David's harp. The royal Psalmist slept but little; he gave precious hours to the study of God's law. Over his bed he hung his harp, and at midnight, moved by the north wind, it poured forth of itself sweet melody. Aroused by the sound, David sprang from his couch, and spent the rest of the night in study and in song. Could the rabbis have told more impressively how the Psalms were the melody of David's soul stirred by pious emotion?

To illustrate benevolence as a typical virtue of womankind, the story is told of Rabbi Hillel's wife that once a poor man came to her, and piteously begged for food. Seeing his famished state, she impulsively gave him all that she had on hand, and then quietly set to work to prepare a fresh meal. When dinner was ready, Hillel asked his wife the reason of the delay. She told him what she had done, and her husband blessed her for her piety and kindliness.

The rabbis were not only teachers, but traders as well, carrying on various kinds of business for their livelihood. That they were not so very close at a bargain, a suggestive

story would prove. A rabbi, while engaged in prayer, was approached by a customer, who offered a certain price for some goods. He continued his devotions undisturbed. In his eagerness, the man doubled his offer, thinking that the rabbi's silence was due to his being dissatisfied with the first price. In the meantime, the prayer came to an end, and the rabbi sold the goods at the first price offered. He was satisfied with it, and only on account of his prayers could give no answer.

When Herodotus told about the ring of Polycrates, he hardly imagined that the Talmud would furnish a parallel. The story is a practical argument in favour of Sabbath observance. There lived once a righteous Israelite, who was known far and near for his scrupulous regard for the Sabbath; it was a day he held in such high honour that he spared no costs to give it a holiday aspect. The Sabbath among the Jews was never a day of gloomy asceticism. Manual labour was forbidden, but the atmosphere was a bright and joyous one. In the Israelite's vicinity lived a heathen of great wealth. It was foretold to the latter that his property

should fall into the Jew's hands. Determined to thwart prophecy, he sold all his fortune for a precious gem, which he sewed in his turban, so that he might always have his property with him. Once, while crossing a bridge, the breeze blew his turban into the water, and with it he lost his dearly prized jewel. The next day a large fish was brought to market, and as the Israelite wished to have it for his Sabbath meal, he secured it at a high price. On opening it, the jewel was discovered, which made him wealthy for all time.

The special sanctity attached to the Sabbath is further illustrated in a story told of the Emperor Antoninus and Rabbi Judah the Holy. They were on friendly terms with each other, and one Sabbath the Emperor dined with the rabbi, and found the cold food very appetising. He chanced to eat another time at the rabbi's house,—it was on a week-day,—and though the hot repast was costly, this did not taste so well as the other. "Can you tell me, rabbi," the Emperor asked, "what made the cold food so appetising?" "There was a certain spice used in its preparation," the rabbi replied, "which is called

Sabbath, and gives every dish a pleasant flavour." "Let me see it," said the Emperor. "I would very much like to have it used in my kitchen." "This spice," the rabbi answered, "is only to be used by those who keep the Sabbath day holy."

A fair specimen of rabbinical fancy is the following: The world contains ten hard things. The mountain is hard; iron pierces it. Iron is hard; fire melts it. Fire is hard; water extinguishes it. Water is hard; the cloud carries it. The cloud is hard; the air disperses it. The air is hard; man endures it. Man is hard; care bends him. Care is hard; wine banishes it. Wine is hard; sleep conquers it. But death is harder than all things, and still King Solomon maintains, "Benevolence rescues from death."

The arrival of the king was anxiously awaited in a city. The streets were full of people, all eager to catch a glimpse of their ruler's face. A blind rabbi, Sheshet by name, mingled in the crowd. Next to him stood a man who asserted scornfully, "Whole pitchers may go to the well,—what do broken ones want?" The rabbi observed that the words were applied to him on account of his blind-

ness, and answered softly, "Be calm, my friend; you will soon be convinced that I see better than you." Amid great noise a procession approached. "The king comes!" the man exclaimed. "No," said the rabbi, "that is not the king." A second train of men drew near, amid the wildest uproar. "Now it is the king," said the man. "No," replied the rabbi, "again you are mistaken." At last a third procession approached, and a solemn stillness prevailed. "Now the king has arrived," said the rabbi, and it was truly so. "How can you know this in your blindness?" asked the man, amazed. "An earthly sovereign," rejoined the rabbi, "resembles the heavenly Monarch. When God appeared in the wilderness to the prophet Elijah, there was storm, fire, and earthquake. Yet in all these manifestations of nature the Deity approached not. It was only when a light breeze stirred that the prophet heard the voice of God."

The fondness of the rabbis for allegory is illustrated in the following anecdote. Rabbi Gamaliel, head of the academy, celebrated his son's wedding, and among his guests were three rabbis, Elieser, Joshua, and Sadok. Gamaliel handed a goblet of wine to Elieser,

who did not accept it, being unwilling to be served by so eminent a man. It was next offered to Joshua, who quaffed it without any hesitation. "Is it proper," said Elieser to Joshua, "that we are seated comfortably here, and allow ourselves to be waited on by our master?" "I know a greater man," Joshua rejoined, "who waited on his guests. Did not the patriarch Abraham wait upon visitors whom he thought to be Arabian travellers, not angels?" "How long," Sadok observed, "will you talk about the honour of mankind, and forget the glory of the Creator! Does not God wait upon humanity? Does he not let the winds blow and the clouds descend? Does he not send rain to fructify the soil, that plants may spring forth? Does he not then set the table for every human being?"

For *every* human being! That was the gentle universalism of the rabbis; and while in times of sharp distress and bitter recrimination, their utterances were human in their passion and agony, that spirit of broad humanity was never wholly absent. A heathen, said Rabbi Meir, who occupies himself with the law of God stands in the same rank as the high-priest.

CHAPTER XIII

WHAT MAKES A JEW?

DESPITE the remarkable progress of our age in every sphere, it is peculiar what ignorance prevails in reference to the Jew and Judaism.

The search-light of history seems here to have failed, and it is the caricature which is most frequently in the popular mind, fed on the vulgar types that appear on the stage and in the comic press.

Even when the Jew is made the subject of serious discussion among thoughtful and cultured people, his atmosphere is that of an antique: he is supposed to be living in a shell, wearing a huge white beard, and mumbling Hebrew prayers, with occasional intervals to take unfair advantage of his neighbour or competitor. In legend he is Ahasuerus the Wanderer, with no rest for his weary feet, but ever a mark for ridicule and insult as he

passes from land to land a helpless, sorrow-stricken fugitive.

Such are the mysteries of Providence, that the glorious history of the Jew ages ago, with temple, court, commerce, army, and all the paraphernalia of a prosperous state as it existed before the death-grapple with Rome, appears like a legend, while the legend of Ahasuerus is realised in each period of persecution, in every fugitive to-day from Russia and Poland, whom the entire civilised world, except our own God-favoured America, commands to "move on!"

The persistence of popular ignorance is due to the anomalous position which the Jews have occupied within very recent decades, in nearly every land. Since the French Revolution, civil and religious liberty has made gigantic strides, it is true, but the Ghetto walls have not wholly disappeared abroad; and even at home the process of social emancipation has not been completed. If the world has long banished them from fellowship and treated them as outcasts, the Jews themselves cannot be blamed for clinging here and there to their Ghetto and forming an exclusive class, disdaining inter-

course with their neighbours of a different faith, and cherishing olden dreams and aspirations out of place in our nineteenth century existence. Under such conditions, how was it possible for the world to learn what makes the Jew and Judaism?

Happily a new era is dawning—the world is entering upon a new phase, which emphasises the humanity of the religions, not the religions of humanity, and which arrays as partners, not competitors, the faiths that make for God, virtue, and immortality. It is becoming understood at last that there is one Commander and army, however numerous the divisions and banners and diverse the uniforms and equipments. In the struggle to uplift and reform, to teach and to refine, to plant "a new heaven and a new earth," even the Jew's modest rights are recognised in the ranks and his co-operation is no longer spurned. In our era of upheaval in every sphere, when faith and unfaith are locked in a closer struggle than ever before, more interest is commencing to be shown in the character and acquirements of the Jew, whose Law and Psalms and Prophets form an integral portion of the spiritual wealth of mankind.

It is by no means so simple an inquiry—What makes the Jew? Because the reluctance which the Jewish people always felt as to formulating creeds and defining Judaism still continues. In Biblical times, the priest, who emphasised the form, and the prophet, who emphasised the spirit, were both Jews—to employ a convenient appellation. When the shadows of approaching dissolution were darkening Jerusalem, the Pharisee, Sadducee, and Essene, representing different schools of thought, were Jews all the same. The Karaite of the early Middle Ages was no less a Jew than the rabbinical followers of tradition. The rationalistic Jew of the United States and the superstitious Jew of Galicia who believes in the Cabala more than the Law of Moses, are brethren and co-religionists, however vast the gulf between them.

The Jew is proud that the unity of Judaism is organic, not mechanical, that it admits of phases of development and promotes a healthy conflict of opinion. It is no cast-iron creed, demanding absolute uniformity and threatening excommunication to the non-conformist. It is a religion, not a theology;

a life, not a creed; practical performance, not abstract doctrine; action, not theory.

Because Judaism is so broad and progressive, adapting itself to each new environment, the Jew has survived and his original Semitism has developed into a cosmopolitanism that makes him a citizen of every land which assures him civil and religious liberty. He can be conservative in England, liberal in Germany, a pietist in Poland, a mystic in Turkey, and wear in the United States an intellectual coat of many colours which would astound his brethren in India.

Many are the elements which make the Jew. It is not birth and tradition alone, but his environment as well, and the play of subtle indefinable conditions which affect his individuality and consciousness. He belongs to a community which is the reverse of inquisitorial, which demands no assent to formal articles of belief, but takes it for granted that he is in sympathy with the essentials of his ancestral religion by the mere fact of his being a Jew. Even in lands where the synagogue exercises ecclesiastical privileges, there is no attempt made to interfere with the individual. Of course, in the

United States, where the rabbi is simply a teacher, not an ecclesiastic, and each synagogue's autonomy is strictly maintained, the utmost liberty is the order of the day. A Jew may never attend the synagogue of which he is a member or may not belong to any Jewish congregation at all; he is still a Jew.

It would seem that the general unwillingness in the past to define Judaism was not without a wise purpose, as it has certainly maintained a healthy spirit of toleration and brotherhood, and kept alive a certain national religious consciousness centuries after the extinction of nationality and temple-worship. In fact, Judaism's real history may be said to have begun when the Jew was forced in earnest to make the world, not Palestine, his home. In all the various stages of Israel's development, from Mosaism to Prophetism, from Prophetism to Talmudism, from Talmudism to Rabbinism, from Rabbinism to Modern Judaism, the law of progress and adaptation has left its indelible mark. And that law is still continuing in the tendencies of each generation, in the change of form and the conflict of opinions.

It might, then, be asked, Is nothing fixed in Judaism? Is there no solid basis, but are its foundations shifting from age to age? Surely Judaism must mean something, it cannot mean everything. The Jews are usually associated with precise customs and beliefs, which are supposed to have made them what they are, and stamped them as a peculiar people.

Judaism has an adamantine basis in the belief in God, which is not a dogma but an intuition, whose attributes are unity, incorporeality, eternity, and omnipotence. But it is not a mere mystical belief in a blind Power which is at the root of Judaism. The reality of Revelation is its second principle—the revealing on Sinai through Moses, and the confirmation through the prophets, of laws and statutes, the moral and ceremonial law—the immutability of the *Torah* (Law of Moses). As a necessary corollary to this principle comes a third—future reward and punishment for those who obey or transgress the Divine Law. Compensation in the hereafter implies the soul's immortality.

These are the three essential working principles of Judaism, based primarily on the

Pentateuch, supported by the Old Testament in general, and interpreted by the masters of tradition, whose views are preserved in Talmud and later rabbinical digests. It is these which have been Israel's preservative and saved the Jew from becoming a mere Bedouin in the continuous warfare and travail of thousands of years. Happily, too, whatever varying views were held as to these principles and interpretations, amid all the exaggerations and aberrations to which they were subjected, to describe which belongs properly to the future historian of Jewish religious thought, the ethical beauty of prophet, psalmist, and later rabbinical sage, is unquestioned. The study of the Law, too, in its ramifications, through the long chain of traditional development, has contributed largely to Jewish intellectual acumen, and rescued the Jew from torpor when no other occupation was allowed him.

Another and weighty factor in the making of the Jew, whose importance is recognised even by those who no longer acknowledge the authority of the ceremonial code in our enlightened era, has been the ritual, as embodied in "signs" and observances, like

the Sabbath and festivals, in the enactments for the home and synagogue. Their aim was not only to weld the Jews together and keep them a separate community, which should quarantine them, so to speak, from idolatry and secure the permanence of their God-idea, but to promote their moral and physical well-being, to ensure a high degree of self-control over passion and appetite, and to maintain family happiness and purity. In the life of the average Jew, forms and ceremonies, rites and prayers, are firmly established and can render a useful service in perpetuating spiritual truths. They are not necessarily clogs on the moral growth, but may prove spurs to progress as mute yet eloquent reminders of the Divine in our everyday existence. The letter does not always kill—the spirit could not exist without it.

The Jew does not make proselytes; he believes that "the pious of all nations have a share in future bliss." Not the less firmly are his aspirations universal, not tribal. His hope is in the perfectibility of humanity. The dawn of God's kingdom on earth, when God's unity shall be acknowledged by a

world one in spirit and aim, is his highest ideal. He clings to his religion, antique but not antiquated, breathing new life into old forms, until that dawn shall arise.

CHAPTER XIV

THE STORY OF THE SYNAGOGUE

THE story of the synagogue is practically the story of the Jewish people from the Babylonian captivity through successive eras in their history in the East and West, with the alternate light and shade, to the nineteenth century of civil and religious liberty in nearly every land. Such a survey would hardly be complete without a detailed study of the rise and growth of the synagogue in the Orient, its gradual spread as the Jew began to colonise outside of Palestine even before the conquest of Jerusalem by Titus, its appearance in Egypt, Asia Minor, and Italy, and then in Central Europe and Spain. A careful inquiry, too, would investigate the influence of clime and conditions on synagogue architecture. How much of this was original and how much borrowed, consciously or not? Did its development run parallel

with the mosque and church, adopting features from both? Or did it escape wholly foreign influences and develop along its own lines? What, further, was the origin of the synagogue's interior arrangement and what principles underlay its entire construction?

It is impossible within present limits to give any exhaustive history of the synagogue and its architecture, which can be treated from many points of view, whether of art, religion, or archæology. It will be sufficient merely to introduce the reader to the subject, and sketch in outline only the synagogue's eventful story which awaits its capable historian. There is no lack of works which illustrate the church and its history from the earliest date. Stately cathedrals whose foundations were laid in the early Middle Ages still survive with all their splendour to attract the worshipper and delight the tourist. Superb specimens of various schools of architecture, they embody a spiritual beauty and power which uplift for the time thousands of visitors. Pictures of interior and exterior appear in guide-books or are made the subject of more or less elaborate volumes. Distinguished churchmen come to

our shores and lecture on the historic fanes of Europe, while our artists and architects turn for instruction and inspiration to their marvellous lines beneath the open sky, whether in England or Italy, France or Germany, Belgium or Spain; and they reproduce for us vital elements in the church architecture of the past.

What a contrast is offered by the synagogue! A few of the best examples of mediæval architecture were transformed into churches in Spain and Italy, and are no more distinctly recognised as synagogues in the manuals of art. Others, built in times of comparative ease, have long since been destroyed by fire or in popular outbreak. A few ruins in Upper Galilee, half-prophetic in their sad suggestiveness; a traditional site here and there in the East, with legend and history indistinguishable; a synagogue in Jerusalem which dates from the ninth century; a Romanesque specimen at Worms of about the year 1100; a humble Gothic edifice in Prague, parts of which are of the twelfth or thirteenth century—this completes the record of the archæologist. It is a miracle that any survived in later periods of

still more relentless persecution. Yet one can view synagogues from the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries in Holland, Germany, Italy, Russia, and the Orient, although but few of them are remarkable enough to attract many pilgrims and sightseers. The oldest synagogue in London was originally built in 1702; the Touro Synagogue in Newport, R. I., in pure Colonial style, was erected in 1762. If we exclude the splendid synagogues which have appeared within the past forty or fifty years, and which represent every style from the Classic to the Renaissance, but offer little, if any, original contribution to synagogue architecture, the material is meagre indeed for illustration and comment.

The synagogue was always a living organism, an institutional church nearly from the beginning. School, house of prayer, law court, house of assembly, it was to become occasionally a fortress, where the people were to withstand the enemy or perish amid the flames of the sanctuary. One reads with horror of Becket struck to death at the altar —but thousands have fallen in the synagogues, old and young men, women, and

children, uplifting their voices in praise and prayer as they were led to slaughter. The buildings were singularly plain, judging from the rude prints of many mediæval synagogues, but they produce the impression of heroic endeavour and simple living which is suggested by the thought of the old log cabin in the Ohio Valley or the New England meeting-house of an earlier generation. What need of elaborate ornament, when external splendour would only the sooner have aroused popular tumult and doomed the structure to speedier overthrow. So often in the centre of a court-yard, amid the Ghetto's narrow lanes and dwellings built in close contact, the unpretentious synagogue was reared. No private house—such was the pious rule—was to surpass it in height. In the East, under Mohammedan sway, the synagogue could not be higher than the mosque; and in Armenia, when their wily masters built the fane designedly low, the synagogue was constructed still more humbly, so that the worshippers were most comfortable, perhaps, when they literally prostrated themselves in prayer.

In Central Europe the synagogue was the

centre of communal life. Here the ancient liturgy, with its *Leitmotif* more national than individual, was recited with the earnestness of the Covenanters. It is as well to learn, however, that the atmosphere was not one of narrowness or repression. God was described in the historic ritual as the "God of all flesh" and "of all nations," and the lesson was enforced that all men are brethren, with religion no weekly parade but a daily exercise in godliness. If one considers for a moment that the mediæval liturgy was composed in an era of hostility and oppression, its breadth and beauty are all the more remarkable. His old prayer-book is the Jew's only book of martyrs; and while it indulges now and then in "righteous indignation," as the modern theologian might express it, pious resignation is the more dominant note.

The inner history of the synagogue is intensely human. It was never inaccessible like the sacred monastery in the Himalayas, far away from the busy world, but it was close to each one's experience and reflected the joy or sorrow of everyday life. It was the meeting-place of the community, long

before the modern town-hall proved the people's resort in stirring times, and it became inexpressibly dear to each individual. Here the bridegroom worshipped on the Sabbath after his marriage and was "called to the Law" wearing the praying-scarf which his bride, who sat so proudly in the latticed gallery, had embroidered and given as her wedding gift. Here the tender babe was brought on its first outing and made to touch the sacred scroll of the Pentateuch. Here the grateful mother came to pray after her child's birth. Here the orphan and the mourner recited with much devotion the prescribed benediction which made them praise the Almighty even in the shadow of sorrow. Nor was the sinner forgotten—here he did penance, of which solemn act Uriel Acosta was an illustrious exemplar; for he was flogged, although in "a retired corner," in the Amsterdam synagogue in 1633. Further proof of the popular interest in the house of worship is shown by records extant of public announcements on Saturday in synagogue of the results of law-suits and of properties in the market, while lost articles were openly cried and a proclamation of stolen goods was instituted.

The original synagogue is traced in legend to King Jehoiachin of Judah, who, a captive in Babylonia, founded such a place of assembly in the district of Nehardea. Certainly places of worship of some character must have been established in the land of the captivity, and the institution was probably transplanted to Palestine on the return. Ezra is expressly mentioned (Neh. viii.) as calling the people to prayer and instruction, he himself reading the Law, as he and the heads of the community stand upon a wooden platform in the centre of the assembled worshippers. The intellectual character of the synagogue, which was not for prayers only, was thus early emphasised.

The spread of the synagogue was rapid, even before the final downfall of the Temple. It must have been a public necessity, to infer from references in the Talmud to 480 synagogues in Jerusalem which were required for the host of foreign Jews who visited the Temple when its sacrificial service was in full swing. Thus, in the shadow of the larger house were synagogues of the Alexandrians, Libertines, Cyrenians, Elymæans, and Asiatics. In Egypt, where there lived,

according to Philo, nearly a million Jews, was a famous synagogue, the Basilica, in Alexandria, one of the wonders of its age. Many are the allusions in the New Testament to synagogues in Damascus, Antioch, Athens, Corinth, and elsewhere, outside the limits of Palestine, and to Nazareth and Capernaum upon its soil. In the reign of Augustus Cæsar, Rome had many synagogues, which led to the conversion of some men and women of prominence, as the Romans of both sexes found pleasure in visiting the places of worship, even if in later years the Jew and his festivals became the sport of the satirists. When the Christians of Rome in after centuries burnt down a synagogue, and Maximus, the usurper, commanded the Roman Senate to rebuild it at the expense of the state, in derision he was termed a Jew by Ambrosius of Milan. Gradually to the East and the West and the isles of the sea the synagogue spread, and whether by the running stream or seashore, to admit of ablutions, in crowded cities or in forest or deserted village, far distant from the track of the caravan, it resisted every attack and became the people's stronghold.

As was the custom among Christian and Mohammedan, the synagogue was often built close to the tombs of famous rabbis or ascribed to them as founders. The celebrated Petachia in his travels, towards the end of the twelfth century, tells of seeing at Nisibis two synagogues erected by Ezra the Scribe, and at Bagdad three, including the one which tradition refers to Daniel. At Tiberias he visited the synagogue founded by Joshua, and at Damascus the four reared by Elieser ben Asariah, a rabbi of the first Christian century. Petachia was no Münchausen, but gave the story as he was told. Alexandria has a so-called Elijah synagogue, which derives its name from the legend that Elijah dwelt for a time on the spot. Into its neighbouring houses weak and ailing Jews and Mohammedans are piously borne in the fond hope that Elijah, who, among other traditional qualities, restores to health, may heal their wounds and infirmities. You can still be shown at Tiberias Rabbi Meir's synagogue, and near Safet the synagogue ascribed to the illustrious Simon ben Jochai.

The list of famous synagogues, while not lengthy, includes some of historic interest.

It begins with the Basilica of Alexandria, which fell when the prosperous Jewish community vanished in a sudden whirlwind of persecution (about 110 of the common era). To paraphrase the description in the Talmud, he who never beheld it never saw the majesty of Israel. It was like a basilica, colonnade within colonnade, crowded often with a host of people twice as large as departed with Moses from Egypt. There, too, could be seen golden chairs inlaid with precious stones corresponding in number with the seventy elders of the Sanhedrim, the cost of each seat being estimated at twenty-five million golden denarii. On an elevation of wood in the centre stood the choir leader. Each guild—for the different arts and trades had their separate guilds before the practice arose in the German mediæval towns, with which it is usually associated—had its own place, so that a stranger might recognise his own trade and join his comrades. The responses of the vast congregation had to be directed by a flag signal, so immense was the edifice.

It was in Spain where synagogues of surpassing beauty began to be built. The age was called a golden one for art, science, and

literature, centuries before Shakespeare. But the breathing spell for the Jew was not of long continuance. When Cordova fell, in 1148, its magnificent synagogues were destroyed. Toledo had a number of splendidly built homes of worship, two of which exist after varied transformations and arouse the visitor's admiration. El Transito was constructed by the largess of Samuel Abulafia, in 1357. Partly Gothic and partly Moorish, it retains traces of its former grandeur. It consists of several naves separated from each other by columns and arches. The upper part of the walls is decorated with delicately cut arabesques, within which can be read Psalm lxxx. in Hebrew, in white characters on green ground. Inscriptions in bas-relief on the north and south sides recite the merits of the founder and of Don Pedro of Castile. By a sudden change of fortune, Abulafia, once Don Pedro's trusted treasurer and adviser, died under the torture, only three years after the synagogue was completed (1360). He was spared the knowledge that 150 years later the edifice was to be changed into a church, which was no rare proceeding in the Middle Ages, it being

easier to convert a synagogue than its worshippers. To-day it is being restored by the Spanish Government; the gypsum which was plentifully employed to hide the decorations is to be removed—a kindly act on the part of the authorities, although it is doubtful if the edifice would again be used by the Jewish community, unless the latter be considerably increased by fresh accessions.

The Portuguese synagogue in Amsterdam, with its memories of Spinoza; the Bevis Marks synagogue, London, originally built in 1702, and for which the Quaker architect would receive no remuneration except its actual cost (£2750), and in whose roof was incorporated as a gift from Queen Anne a beam from a royal ship; the synagogue at Venice, whose architect was Sansovino, and which dates from the sixteenth century, in the spacious style of the time, suggesting the wealth and culture of its Jewish residents; the Old-New Synagogue at Prague, around which cluster fanciful legends; the old synagogue at Worms, with its traditions of the famous commentator Rashi, both crowned with venerable age and the dignity of pilgrim shrines—these, perhaps, complete

the roll of the most memorable synagogues in Central Europe. In the far East, however, are various synagogues which have a remarkable antiquity, if we are to believe the credulous. It is very probable that the origin of most of them is draped in as much myth as the once curious synagogue at Kai Fung Foo, in the province of Honan, China, before poverty dismantled the edifice and sold its ornaments and holy equipment for bread and raiment.

In a letter from Venice Goethe tells how he succeeded in hearing anew the classical song of the gondolier, whose melody, with its memories of Tasso and Ariosto, had long since been silenced. To gain an accurate knowledge of the synagogue, we must put ourselves *en rapport* with its conditions in every age, and then can we appreciate its powers of resistance. In the fifth century the building of new synagogues was prohibited by Theodosius II., whose decree was renewed with increased severity by Justinian, a century later. Theodoric gave no hearty assent to the request of the Jews of Genoa to be allowed to put their synagogue into better repair, but he was kindlier disposed

when he condemned the Roman commune to pay for the synagogue which a mob in the imperial city had burnt. A synagogue in Sicily was destroyed by Gregory I. Omar I. showed little consideration to church or synagogue, while Omar II. (717–20), wrote to his governors: "Do not pull down a church or synagogue, but do not allow new ones to be built." New synagogues were prohibited by law in the reign of Alfonso X. of Castile (1252–84). The Jews of England were forbidden by Stephen Langton, at the Council of Oxford (1222), to erect synagogues. In 1442 the Bishop of Leon and Castile received a decree from Pope Eugenius IV., forbidding the building of new synagogues. Against the synagogues of Antioch how Chrysostom thundered, calling them infamous theatres and dens of robbers. Theodosius the Great (379–395) expressly commanded the Bishop of Callinicus in Northern Mesopotamia to rebuild at his own expense the synagogue which he had caused to be burnt—an act of justice which was imitated by the Byzantine Emperor, Arcadius (395–408), who protected the synagogue against the clergy of Illyria. While Cyril of Alexan-

dria, whose name will always be associated with Hypatia's death, induced the mob to destroy the synagogue in that city, Theodosius II. made the clergy and people of Antioch restore the synagogue to the Jews. Martin V., who in 1419 issued a bull wherein it was stated that Jews should not be molested in their synagogues, was not the only Pope who showed a kindly spirit. The churchmen of Sens were inflamed in the days of Innocent III. because the synagogue's structure was higher than the church, although in the fourteenth century in Rome, church and synagogue were close neighbours without awakening any ill-feeling. In Hamburg as late as 1612 Jews were not allowed to have synagogues; nor was the privilege to have a place of worship in New Amsterdam and early New York secured without a struggle. Such were the varying fortunes of the synagogue, in different times and in different places, which can hardly be realised in favoured lands to-day.

The historic Old-New Synagogue of Prague furnishes a good illustration of the experiences which have been endured from age to age. Its early origin is proved by the fact that in

1142 it was destroyed by fire, although speedily rebuilt. In 1336 King John robbed it of gold and silver; in 1389 it was the scene of ghastly persecution, men, women, and children being slain within its walls. An elegy composed shortly afterwards is still recited in the synagogue on the Day of Atonement, in memory of that catastrophe. The synagogue was ever the centre of similar scenes, as the Jews were subjected to the caprice of their rulers. In 1744, when the Prussians abandoned Prague, the house of worship suffered severely, and it was plundered by Maria Theresa's troops. In 1784, when the Moldau had a disastrous inundation, the synagogue was injured. Yet amid the ravages of fire and water, and ruffianly desecration in war time, it has survived. There can be seen hanging in the synagogue's interior a banner richly embroidered with gold and suitably inscribed, an heirloom in which all take pride. This was given to the congregation, according to one version, by Charles IV., and according to another it was a reward for their courageous defence of the city during the siege by the Swedes in 1648. No symbol could be happier in its testimony

to the fact which Prof. Goldwin Smith once, when Disraeli's satire was still rankling, denied—that Jews can be patriots.

Many are the legends which are associated with the edifice, whose rather sombre interior has been renovated, but none is more suggestive than that of the dove—a bird which is popular in folk-lore. During one of the most extensive conflagrations in the Ghetto, when the synagogue seemed doomed, a dove was observed alighting upon the roof's highest pinnacle and keeping its perilous place untouched and unterrified amid the smoke and flame from adjacent dwellings which came ever nearer. Through those hours of dismay the dove never left its perch for a moment, but held its post like a sentinel to repel disaster. Then when the fire had been stayed and danger averted, the dove, as if satisfied that its presence was no longer required, took to flight and was seen no more, while the people wondered at the miracle.

Hardly less remarkable was the fate of the synagogue of Frankfort-on-the-Main. In 1241, the year of the first massacre of the Jews, the synagogue suffered severely, and its unpleasant experience was repeated in

1349. When the Jewish quarter was transferred in 1462, the synagogue was made to serve general communal purposes. In 1874 the foundations of the old structure were revealed—it consisted of a square apartment with a half-round niche for the scrolls of the Law; on the northern side was the women's synagogue. Before the new Jewish quarter was occupied, in 1461, a synagogue was built at the city's cost, close to which, in 1603, a new edifice was erected. Both were attacked by the mob in 1614 and were burnt to the ground in 1711; but the restoration began in the same year on the old site and with the old materials. In 1854 it was torn down to make room for the present edifice, not far from the original home of the Rothschilds.

If the old synagogues which survive breathe of the stormy past, the new synagogue at Rome, which was dedicated not many months ago and whose site was given by the municipality in exchange for a strip of ground in the Ghetto, has a more exultant atmosphere; for its stately façade and magnificent interior suggest the new century and the progress which has been won. The oldest Jewish community in Europe, its

existence for 2000 years is little short of a miracle, for despite unhealthy quarters bordering on the Tiber, in which it has been caged for centuries, until recent decades, it has survived its more or less aristocratic foes—emperor, noble, and prelate. While the condition of the Jews of Rome was often bearable, compared with the fate of their brethren in the greater part of Europe, when Paul IV., in 1556, officially established the Ghetto—the word is of Venetian origin—the most odious forms of persecution became the fashion. Here for two centuries the Jews had to participate with asses, buffaloes, and Barbary steeds in the races on the Corso, amid the shouts and ribaldry of the multitude. Here for many hundred years they had to receive each new Pope, with knees bent in homage and holding in their hands the scrolls of the Law. Here as late as 1847 Jews above the age of twelve were whipped into attendance at church on Saturday afternoons so that they might be converted. Here they were allowed to have only one building as a synagogue, wherein, until it was destroyed by fire in 1893, five separate congregations were housed. Here, too, their occupations

were often restricted by law to dealing in old clothes, rags, and iron. It was enough to devitalise any community, but the treatment did not kill, and out of their midst have gone forth the first lexicographer of the Talmud, a poet friend of Dante, famous writers, physicians, musicians.

It was in 1870, after desultory efforts, that the Jews of Rome took effective steps to have the Ghetto destroyed, with the ascension of Victor Emmanuel. Fifteen years later the noxious quarter was levelled. The new synagogue, built in a different section, tells the story of emancipation. If stones could speak, what could not the Arch of Titus—dating from 70 of the common era—tell of the whirligig of time which brings its revenges, but few more decisive, to rejoice the cold chiselled figures of Jewish captives from Jerusalem, than that new temple where the Law is still recited, despite the legions of Vespasian and eighteen centuries of Rome's sovereignty in varied forms! Do the old occupants of the Pantheon know of the sacrilege, and what would Horace or Juvenal or Tacitus say now of the synagogue?

One is tempted to dwell at greater length

on the varied fortunes of the synagogue and the legends that twine around the old structures, but a subject of wider interest must be considered—its architecture. One might infer from popular impressions of Jewish exclusiveness that the synagogue had its special form of architecture from which a departure was heresy. The fact is, there is no distinctly Jewish architecture—it is eclectic and varies with the environment. In Jerusalem an old synagogue has the appearance of a mosque. The interior of the Romanesque synagogue of Regensburg, which centuries ago fell a prey to the flames, has the lines of the Cathedral of Spires. The St. Petersburg synagogue has unmistakably the characteristic exterior of a Russian Greek church. Perhaps the Gothic and Moorish in varied modifications are seen most frequently, but although the arch, the dome, and the minaret are often presented, the steeple and the belfry are absent. Perhaps the synagogue is hospitable enough to adopt these in the future.

The synagogue ruins in Galilee, dating from 150 to 300 of the common era, are of Roman character in their masonry, moulding,

and ornamentation—proving how early current styles were adopted. Toledo's famous synagogue, changed into a church in 1405, and known as Santa Maria la Blancha, is built after the most approved Moorish-Spanish design, which can only faintly be seen in illustration. Its plan is that of a basilica, the ground floor tiled, being an oblong square about ninety by sixty-five feet, divided into five naves or aisles, divided by four rows of octagon pillars, nine in each row. Horseshoe arches of peculiar Moorish pattern rise from these columns. Over the arches, whose spandrels are carved into elegant rose-patterns, is placed a second arcade, ornamented with pure Byzantine work, appearing like stone-lace. A third series of stalactite archlets rests upon double pillarets, crowned by an elaborate frieze reaching to the roof. This roof, though of wood, has the durability of rock, and, black with age, still shows traces of gold ornamentation. The edifice was used as a Magdalen Asylum in 1550, and on the French invasion, in 1792, was appropriated for military barracks.

Sicily has a Gothic Catholic church which was formerly a synagogue. The wooden

structures to be found originally in Poland and parts of Russia, from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and somewhat later, have been made the subject of special monographs. Some of these houses of worship were built as bulwarks against Tartar inroads; others with their flat roofs and openings show indubitable signs that they could harbour cannon when the Jews were forced to defend themselves. They form a curious study for the modern architect, and are not likely to serve as models for our days.

The latest synagogues, built on the broad places of the chief cities and no longer hidden in the narrow Ghetto, represent all styles of architecture. The Classic, the Renaissance, the Byzantine, the Romanesque, with a blending of the Gothic and the Moorish, can be found in all directions. The new synagogues in Szegedin and Temesvar; in Berlin, Strasburg, and Cologne; in Florence, Rome, and Turin; with similar edifices in Budapest, Breslau, Glogau, Hanover, Koenigsberg, Frankfort, Munich, Paris, Posen, Vienna, and Warsaw, show freedom and beauty in their construction. The same

variety of style is illustrated in American synagogues and temples.

A word only in this connection as to the interior arrangement that reproduces in certain features the lines of the older tabernacle, which itself suggested interior arrangements in Solomon's Temple. In the centre of the main floor is usually an elevated platform from which the prayers are read. Directly facing the entrance from the vestibule, which is generally at the western end, so that the synagogue may face the east, is the Ark, or receptacle for the scrolls of the Law or Pentateuch, before which is hung a curtain. In the old synagogues there was either a latticed gallery or a special room for women worshippers. In many of the later synagogues, reading desk and pulpit are combined before the Ark, while in reformed American congregations family pews have been introduced, thus doing away with the Oriental feature of the women's gallery. It can readily be seen how Ark, curtain, gallery, and columns lend themselves to splendid and unique ornamentation. Although the plastic art has received little encouragement, carved wood and rich marbles are generally em-

ployed, onyx, gold, and mosaics being used with fine effect. In the Orient many a synagogue whose exterior is sombre and uninviting has magnificent interior furnishings and decorations. The Italian synagogues, in particular, in a land where artistic genius is almost universal, are remarkable for the costly embroidered curtains and architectural beauty of the Ark, in whose enrichment a generous rivalry is exhibited. In this respect a synagogue appears like a votive shrine, and elaborate gifts, often women's exquisite handiwork, are treasured from generation to generation until they acquire a venerable age, to become a powerful object-lesson to the young, and to the old worshipper matters for pious contemplation.

CHAPTER XV

A NEW FIELD FOR RELIGION

IF ours may not be called the international era, there is little doubt that such an era is fast approaching. Just as bits of spar and wandering birds betoken land to the tourist at sea, there are signs as unmistakable which are full of hopeful prophecy. Steam and the telegraph are giving the nations one language. The great world-capitals now throb in unison. Toward the portals of the same university—that of travel—flock millions from every civilised race; and the course tends to bring the graduates of every land and creed into a fellowship as mysterious as it is profound. It teaches humanity, if not the humanities.

As a result of the unparalleled increase in the facilities of intercommunication, all classes and conditions of men are stirring from their enforced isolation and by a sympathetic impulse are impelled toward union.

In the days of the migration of nations—a process still continuing, if in a modified form —prehistoric tribes and races of well-ascertained origin could spread like an avalanche; and, bursting their narrow confines, overwhelm cities and countries, thus giving new form and character to the world's history. To-day nations emigrate slowly if surely; but ideas migrate, so to speak, with greater rapidity, and with the impetuosity of an Alpine torrent overcome every obstacle, and broaden humanity's ever-widening stream.

The most significant sign of the international age at hand is the denationalisation of the silent forces that condition all progress. Science, art, literature, medicine, law, are no longer local and national; they are international. They represent world-guilds—unsectarian, universal. Within late years, the international medical, hygienic, literary, electric, law, Oriental, and stenographic congresses, held in Europe and America, and participated in by the foremost men in their respective fields, are harbingers that "the individual withers and the world is more and more."

It is possible—and the last International

Oriental Congress at Vienna proved the fact —for Christian, Moslem, and Hebrew to co-operate in scientific advancement. Why must philology, for instance, be the only field where such co-operation is practicable? Why must hygiene, law, medicine, science, literature, and kindred subjects be raised to the dignity of international problems? Surely the increasing catholicity of mankind is not to be limited to these departments. There is pressing need of developing the international idea to that most vital of all subjects—religion. There is a call, then, for an international religious congress, to be composed of representatives of all religions that make for righteousness and recognise in some form or manner God, virtue, and immortality.

Local lines are fast dropping out of the creeds with which we are most familiar. The Evangelical Alliance has had a happy influence in welding together the great majority of Protestant Christians throughout the world. Church congresses at home and abroad are marshalling their adherents on broader grounds. But attempts to range the religions beyond their national lines have

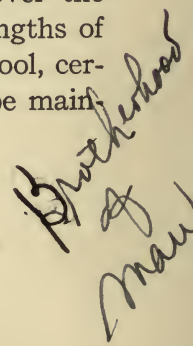
never yet been made. The inner wall is falling slowly; but the outer rampart frowns just as defiantly as in the days of warring creeds and religious persecutions. The rampart must be levelled, that co-operation, not enmity, be the programme of the coming age.

It may be called too rose-coloured a view to claim that the border-land of the creeds is widening day by day. You may point to ugly disabilities against Jews and Protestants in Russia. You may refer to anti-Semitism in German-speaking lands. The persistency of ancient prejudices is not to be denied, but their force is overestimated, and they are gradually dying. London, for example, not satisfied with electing a Jewish lord mayor some years ago, has now a Catholic in that office. In our own country, on a recent Thanksgiving Day in more than one town, Protestant, Catholic, and Hebrew participated in the services. In most cases, race-prejudice is social, political, and personal, and not at all religious. The immense progress made in toleration since the French Revolution has been organic, not mechanical. The civilised world is not likely to go backward, but the indications point the other way,

as commerce irresistibly advances and all languages fuse into one.

I am well aware of the fallacies of ethical sentimentalism. The lion and the lamb retain all the peculiarities of their species and still show no disposition to lie down together in childlike peace. Not so many decades ago Fichte and his select school of idealists spun their fantastic dreams, which the rude shock of war swiftly dissipated. Lessing's ideal of the gradual progress of mankind toward perfection will take a few years to be accomplished—we have scarcely reached the New Atlantis yet. There are ugly forces in our civilisation which have first to be eliminated—new powers have to come into play. What ages, what epochs, have to pass before the final era of transformation begins, "when the earth shall be full of the knowledge of God as the waters cover the seas." But without going to the lengths of moralists of the Della Cruscan School, certainly a reasonable optimism is to be maintained.

"A second voice was at mine ear,
A little whisper silver clear,
A murmur, 'Be of better cheer.'"



In one of Berthold Auerbach's tales, he refers to the effect produced by the tones of a bell, heard as one enters a forest, becoming fainter and fainter, like fading hope, as the traveller proceeds. There is beauty in the simile; but, like many of its class, it can serve a double purpose. What of the joyous effect of bird-song or bell-note, growing louder and louder as one nears the forest's end, until daylight bursts upon the traveller? Such bird-songs and bell-notes can no longer be disdained.

When Schiller wrote in his *Wilhelm Tell:*

> "That was a shot!
> It will be talked of to the latest ages"—

an idea which lies at the basis of Emerson's famous line:

> "Fired the shot heard round the world"—

the poet symbolised the unity of the human race and its common, inalienable aspirations and sympathies. The idea of human brotherhood is more and more recognised in this century, marked not alone by material progress, but by spiritual and moral activity

as well. When we for a moment emerge from our bundle of hereditary prejudices, and prove superior to the narrow and exclusive views for which our education alone is responsible, we begin to see that the sky is broader and larger than the little patch above us. That acknowledgment is a great step forward. The next is the determination to have an open window in our creed; we crave more light, more air, and the sweet symphonies from our neighbour's house no longer offend us. We discern therein familiar harmonies—spirit-calls to kindly deeds.

I love to dwell upon the common utterances in the Scriptures to which people of different races attach such veneration. The mental flora and fauna of the nations disclose strange similarities; and yet not strange, for are they not written by the finger of God? When I read a sentence from a rabbi in the Talmud, breathing of love and toleration; when I turn to just as fragrant a thought in the Christian Testament; when some universal law of humanity is wafted from the Koran or inspired by the Buddhist sage—such coincidences prove the inherent unity of all human nature, and strung together,

as they will be in the age to come, will form the Bible of humanity:

> "Slowly the Bible of the race is writ,
> And not on paper leaves nor leaves of stone.
> Each age, each kindred adds a verse to it,
> Texts of despair or hope, of joy or moan.
> Still at the prophets' feet the nations sit."

People are nearer each other than many think. In my summer vacation I am often amazed to find that a good Episcopalian, a cheery Methodist, a bland Universalist, and a ruddy Catholic are men and brethren. It is possible that we all may agree to be silent on some topics, but on how many does perfect concord reign! And how invigorating the intercourse! There is no hypocrisy in such agreement of minds supposed to be constitutionally unsympathetic. We recognise a common brotherhood and our synagogue or our church is given an added sanctity. We lose not an iota of our loyalty to our creed, but we hear the joy-bells of the creed to be. When the brief spell of vacation is past, and we have all resumed our respective robes of office—cassock, gown, rabbi's cap, and the rest—who can deny that each of us is better for the kindly interchange of views?

The Psalms of David have grown in meaning to me since I heard them in a lovely ivy-clad church in Berkshire. I can appreciate the beauties of Keble without weakening the charm which Judah Hallevi, the sweet singer of the synagogue, has always exercised. And if the warm hand-clasp, the beaming eye, the hearty phrase mean anything, my Catholic or Protestant brother has been similarly affected. He feels now that a man can be a Jew *and* a brother.

But it is not only this friendly intercourse, it is co-operation of the creeds for human betterment which is the hopeful sign of the times. The gentlemen who personally organised a lodging-house in the most unsavoury section of a large city never asked, What church do you belong to? Nor did they inquire as to the religious principles of the recipients of their bounty. They did not insist upon hymns, or psalm-singing, or daily devotions. It was a common humanity that impelled them to kindly deeds. The scales may have fallen from some of our eyes; they are not likely to be resumed. "Without distinction of creed" is the motto of the true philanthropist.

The border-land of the creeds is widening day by day. People are gradually awakening to the points of agreement between the different sects, and find themselves not so very far apart that they cannot stretch a helping hand across the gap. One crucial test is demanded—not the repetition of prayer or formula, not antiquity, or vestments, or wealthy endowments, or venerable associations, but the translation into life of what is best and purest in the traditional faith and symbol. The weaknesses no less than the virtues of a common humanity array us shoulder to shoulder. It is beginning to be understood that the universals of honesty, virtue, purity, cement men more firmly than the particulars of doctrine and litany, which have a knack of driving men apart and convert religion into rancour. The manly preacher, the thoughtful worker in every creed finds the basis broadening for common action.

The nations are by no means out of the forest, but bird-note and bell-sound are growing louder and clearer. It will not be always forest and enmity and bitter recrimination among those who should hasten the

era of peace and good-will on earth. To emphasise that sentiment in the broadest possible way, action is needed. And an international religious congress, composed of representatives of every sect that works for righteousness—for God, for virtue, for immortality—would be one powerful and practicable method of welding together the world-religions.

But it may be said in objection to the plan—it is ahead of the age. Let this thought from Robert Browning be answer:

"'T is in the advance of individual minds
That the slow crowd should ground their expectations,
Eventually to follow—as the sea
Waits ages in its bed, till some one wave
But of the multitude aspires, extends
The empire of the whole, some feet, perhaps,
Over the strip of sand which could confine
Its fellows so long time; thenceforth the rest,
Even to the meanest, hurry in at once,
And so much is clear gain."

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